ROBERTSON'S CHEAP SERIES

POPULAR READING AT POPULAR PRICES.

KINDLY PRESENTED BY Mrs. S. R. Higgins

FAIR PLAY;

OR,

THE TEST OF THE LONE ISLE.

BY

MRS. EMMA D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

Author of "Ishmael, or, In The Depths," "The Missing Bride," "The Changed Brides," "How He Won Her," "A Noble Lord," "The Bridal Eve," &c., &c.

COMPLETE.

TORONTO:

J. ROSS ROBERTSON, 55 KING ST. WEST, COR. BAY.

1886.

BR(s)
813.3
S594.7

THE PROPERTY OF
THE ATHENAEUM CLUB.
NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THE
READING ROOM.

FAIR PLAY.

CHAPTER I.

THE FOUR BELLES OF BELLEMONT.

Ah! happy girls! such feelings pure
They will not, can not long endure;—

One shall the fury passions tear,
Disdainful anger, pallid fear;

One—pining love shall waste her youth
And jealousy with rankling tooth;

One shall ambition tempt to rise
And snatch from fortune's hand the prize;

And one to scorn a sacrifice
Bows down her stricken head and dies.

—*Anon.*

'God created woman, a living soul, worthy to stand in His presence and worship him! and if it were only from the reverence she owes Him, she should never degrade herself to be any man's slave! God endowed woman with individual life—with power, will and understanding, brain, heart and hands to do His work; and if it were only in gratitude to Him, she should never commit the moral suicide of becoming the nonentity of which man's law makes a wife!'

She was a splendid creature who uttered this heterodoxy, a magnificent and beautiful creature! She spoke fervently, earnestly, passionately, with blazing eyes, flushed cheeks and crimsoned lips that seemed to breathe the fire that burned in her enthusiastic soul.

She was the most brilliant of a group of four lovely young girls who were seated on the fresh grass, in a grove of magnolia trees on the south bank of the James.

Before them flowed the fair river, fringed with wooded shores and dotted with green isles, all sparkling in the early sunlight of a June morning.

Behind them, from amidst its ornamental grounds, arose the white walls of Bellemont College for young ladies.

The first day of June was the Annual Commencement of the college. And these four young girls, all dressed in purest white robes with rose-coloured wreaths and sashes, had sauntered out together and grouped themselves under the magnolia trees to wait for the ringing of the bell which should call them to the exhibition room.

Four more beautiful young creatures than these could scarcely be found in the world. They were called the Four Belles of Bellemont. They would have been belles anywhere and borne off palms of beauty from all other competitors. Yet beautiful as each one was, the four were not rival belles; because, in fact, each one was of a totally different style from all the others. They might be said to represent the four orders of female beauty—the blue, gray, hazel, and black-eyed-woman.

So far they were free from being rivals, that they were fast friends, banded in an alliance for offence and defence against the whole school, if not the whole world!

Britomarte Conyers, the man hater, the woman's champion, first in beauty, grace and intellect, was, as I said, a magnificent creature—not in regard to size, for she was not so tall as the blue-eyed belle, nor so full-fleshed as the hazel-eyed one; but magnificent in the sense of conscious strength, ardour and energy with which she impressed all. She felt and made you feel, that if her earnest soul had been clothed with the form of a man, she would have been one to govern the minds of men and guide the fortunes of nations; or, woman as she was if law and custom had allowed her freer action and a fairer field, she would have influenced the progress of humanity and filled a place in history. Britomarte knew this and rebelled against

the fate that made her woman and the law that limited her liberty to woman's sphere.

Proud, brave, just, ardent, enthusiastic, she was capable of the most sublime self-devotion, of achieving or enduring to the utmost in the cause of right. Religious with the stern spirit of the ancient Jews or early Christians, like Judith she could have cut off the head of Holofernes without relenting; like Joan, she could have led armies without blenching; or, like Agnes, braved the stake without recanting.

In a word, Britomarte was of the stuff that reformers, heroes and martyrs are made. And she sat there under the magnolia trees, enjoying with her companions all the calm delights of a favoured country blessed with perfect peace and crowned with proud prosperity, all unawares, she was coming upon years when the sternness of a Judith, the courage of a Joan and the devotion of an Agnes would be needed by every woman in the land. But as yet no smallest cloud dimmed the serene heavens or warned of the tempest and destruction near.

In person, Britomarte was of medium size and perfect form. Her stately head was covered with rich, glossy, dark brown hair, plainly parted above her forehead, carried back and plaited into a long plait that was wound around her brows, crowning nature's queen with nature's own coronal. Her features were regular, with the exception of her forehead, which was, however, even the more beautiful for being so broad and full, and freighted with intellect. Her dark brown eyebrows overshadowed soft, brilliant, dark gray eyes that brooded with thought, melted with pity, flashed with indignation, or burned with enthusiasm, according to the mood that swayed her mind. Her nose was small and aquiline. Her mouth was delicately curved and full of expression, instinct with spirit and indicative of indomitable will. Her chin was finely curved and slightly protruded. Her complexion was clear and pale, in perfect harmony with her dark brown hair and eyebrows, and dark gray eyes and crimson lips.

She wore the festive uniform of the school—the pure white muslin robe, the rose-coloured ribbons and fresh blush roses in her hair and on her bosom.

Britomarte's present position and prospects were not very brilliant. She was the orphan ward of a maiden aunt, who had sent her to this school to be educated as a governess; and a hard struggle with the world was all that she had to look forward to; but certainly, if ever a woman was formed to fight the battle of life without fear and without reproach, it was this brave, spirited, energetic young amazon.

In this quartette of fair girls the second in merit was certainly Erminie Rosenthal, the daughter of a Lutheran preacher. Erminie was above the medium height, with a well-developed, beautifully rounded, buxom form; softly moulded features, blooming complexion, softly shining, hazel eyes, and a shower of bright, auburn ringlets shading the sweetest face in the whole group. Gentle, tender, loving, constant, her whole life lay in her affections, and she could do and bear as much for those she loved as ever Britomarte could for any great cause. If Britomarte represented the Minerva, the goddess of wisdom and of war, certainly Erminie might be called the Psyche, the goddess of goodness and of love. Erminie was a true woman, and I fancy that she will be the favourite with my readers, outrivalling even the brilliant amazon who gives the name and character to this story. At present Erminie's only love, out of her own family circle, was Britomarte, whom she worshipped with a devotion approaching idolatry. And it was probable the masculine element in the character of the beautiful young amazon that so powerfully magnetized the maiden. When Britomarte spoke, as now Erminie sat at her feet, and gazed up into her eyes, hanging on her words as though they were the oracles uttered by a priestess of the Lord.

The third in his bevy of beauties was Elfrida Fielding, the daughter of a thriving farmer. Elfie was small, slight, and elegant in figure, and dark in complexion, with a rich crimson flush upon cheeks and lips, and with black eyes, eyelashes and eyebrows, and jet black hair, cut short, parted on the left side, and worn in crisp curls like a boy's. Elfie was the wild sprite, the mischievous monkey, the fast little girl of the party. She was lively, witty, impulsive, excitable, fickle, and had an especial affinity for—anything and everything in its turn, and an especial mission to engage in—anything and everything that turned up.

Fourth and last among the four belles of Bellemont, though certainly first in social position, was Alberta Goldsborough, the daughter of a wealthy merchant in Richmond, and the heiress in her own right of a rich plantation on the James. Alberta was tall, slender and dignified, with classic, marble-like features, dazzlingly fair complexion, light golden hair, and light blue eyes. She was a statuesque, blonde beauty. In temperament she was cool and calm; in

manner stately and placid. So far from having any affinity or mission on this earth, she had scarcely a sentiment or an opinion of her own. She was the model young lady of her set. I hope you approve of her. She was dressed, like her companions, in the festive uniform of the day—a white robe, with rose-coloured ribbons and flowers.

The four belles, languidly reclining under the magnolia trees, had been discussing, as school-girls always do when they get together out of the sight of their teachers—first the highly important subject of dress: Elfie exclaiming indignantly at the outrage of being obliged to wear rose-coloured trimmings, when maize or cherry suited her brilliant brunette beauty so much better; and Alberta placidly adding that she herself would have preferred pale blue or mauve as more becoming to her blonde complexion. Erminie made no objection to the uniform, which was perfectly adapted to her blooming loveliness; and Britomarte was too indifferent to the subject to join in the conversation. But when their talk turned upon matters of secondary importance, namely love and marriage, and they had talked a great deal of girlish nonsense thereupon, then Britomarte broke forth with the words that opened this story,

'God created woman a living soul, worthy to stand in His presence and worship Him; and if it only were from the reverence she owes Him, she would never degrade herself to be any man's slave. God endowed woman with individual life, with power, will and understanding, brain, heart and hands, to do His work; and if it were only in gratitude to Him, she would never commit the moral suicide of becoming the nonentity of which man's law makes a wife!'

'Are you right, dear Britomarte?' questioned Erminie, lifting her soft, sunny, hazel eyes to the face of the speaker with a loving, deprecating reverence, as though asking pardon for doubting that any word of her oracle could be less authoritative than those of Holy Writ. 'Are you quite sure that you are perfectly right?'

'I am,' answered Britomarte, firmly.

'But is not man's law of marriage founded upon God's?' timidly persisted Erminie, laying her hands upon the lap of her idol.

'No! Those who say that it is, repeat a falsehood, invented by man and inspired by Satan! The law of marriage founded on the law of God, indeed! There is not a line or a word in the books of Moses or the gospels of Christ to justify the base assertion? Pray, were the glorious women of the Old Testament, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Esther, Deborah, Judith, Jael—women who ruled with men had talked with God and His angels—or were the divine women of the New Testament, Mary, Elizabeth, Anna—the mother of the Christ, the mother of the Baptist, the Prophetess of the Temple—were any of these, I say, the mere nonentities that man's laws make of married women? Never! And more I say! Any man who approves of the present laws of marriage that take away a married woman's property and liberty, and even legal existence—any man, I say, who approves those laws is a despot and despoiler at heart, and would be a robber and murderer if the fear of prisons and scaffolds did not hold him in restraint! And any woman who disapproves these laws, yet dares not express her disapproval, is a slave and coward who deserves her fate!'

'Britomarte, dear, how warm you are. Your cheeks are quite flushed. Take my fan and try not to get so excited,' said Alberta, coolly, presenting a pink and spangled toy to the ardent amazon.

'Hold your tongue! Thank you, I don't want it,' answered Britomarte, waving away the proffered article.

'But, Britomarte, love,' murmured Erminie, leaning upon the champion's lap, and lifting her soft hazel eyes to the champion's face, with that appealing gaze with which the loving plead with the fiery, "Britomarte, darling, "Wives, obey your husbands,' are the words of Holy Writ!"

With an impatient gesture Britomarte pushed off her worshipper, exclaiming;

'Paul said that! He was a dry old lawyer, a bookworm and a bachelor! What did he know about it? And besides, if he had been like Jacob, a married man, with two wives, and two handmaids, and twelve children, I would not take the word of the old apostle any more than I would that of a modern preacher, unsupported by the law of Moses and the gospel of Christ! A man's legislation upon marriage has been guided neither by law nor gospel!'

'Bosh!' exclaimed Elfie, whom neither pastors nor masters had been able to break of the use of slang, 'let the poor wretches make all the laws in their own favour, if it amuses or helps to deceive them. They like it, and it don't hurt us! We needn't trouble our heads to keep their laws, you know! Let who will bother themselves about women's rights, so we have own way! And anything we can't bluster or coax out of our natural enemy ain't worth having! Why, law! girls, the creatures are easily enough managed when you once get used to them! Why, there are no less than three governors at Sunnyslopes—one pap and two uncles;

but who do you think, now rules the roost at Sunnyslopes?'

'You do, when you are at home,' suggested Britomarte.

'You better believe it, my dear! Why, law girls, I can wind pap and uncles round my finger as easily as I can this blade of grass,' said Elfie, suiting the action to the word with a mischievous sparkle in her bright black eyes.

'Well, for my part,' said the fair Alberta coolly p'aying with the gold chain upon her bosom, 'whenever I shall be engaged to be married, it will of course be to the proper sort of person. And papa will see that proper settlements are drawn up between us, and that my own fortune is settled upon myself to spend as I please. In that way I shall secure all the rights I care about. I must have a splendid establishment with costly furniture, and carriages, and horses, and servants, and dresses and jewellery, and unlimited pocket-money. And so that I can have all that, my husband may do all the voting and make all the laws for both of us.'

'Yes!' exclaimed Britomarte, bitterly; 'it is you and such as you, Alberta, that retard the progress of woman's emancipation! If there were no willing slaves, there could be no successful tyrants! You are quite willing to sell your liberty for lucre—to become a slave, so that your claims and fetters be of gold!'

'Yes, these ornaments are rather like handcuffs, are they not!' said Alberta, slightly raising her eyebrows as she displayed the priceless diamond bracelets on her wrists. "But I do not see the justice of your words, Britomarte, since I certainly do not intend to sell my hand for money, but only to have my own inherited fortune settled upon myself.'

'For which simple piece of justice you are willing to concede your most sacred civil and political rights!'

Alberta shrugged her shoulders. 'I don't know what you mean,' she said. 'I speak to you of pocket money, and you answer me with politics. Bah! why should I care, so that I have a fortune to spend independent of my future husband? For just think what a trouble it would be to have to ask him for money every time I wanted to go shopping!'

'Oh! a horrid nuisance! I think I shall follow your example, Alba! I shall get pap to settle the niggers, and the money, and the old blind mare, and all the rest of the personal on me by myself, so that my natural enemy, whenever I shall fall into his hands, can't take it from me. In return for which I will promise to keep in my sphere and not run for constable nor congress,' said Elfie.

'You are both right so far as you go,' said Britomarte, earnestly, 'but you don't go far enough. A girl with property is often married only for that property. And if her husband should be a prodigal and squander it, and bring her to want, or if he should be a miser and hoard it, and deprive her of the comforts of life, she has no redress. Therefore it is well that a woman's property should be settled upon herself, and that she should be independent of her husband, at least as far as money can make her so. What do you say, my dear?' she inquired, turning to Erminie who again lay reclining upon her lap, with the tender hazel eyes upturned to the face of her idol.

Erminie hesitated, the bright bloom wavered on her cheeks, and then deepened into a vivid blush. She dropped her long-fringed eyelids over her soft eyes, and answered gently:

'I am glad I am not rich; very glad that I have nothing at all of my own. Now I go to my dear father for everything I want, and it is sweet to receive it from his hands; for he never refuses me anything he can afford to give, and I never ask him for anything he cannot spare.'

And the Lutheran minister's daughter paused thoughtfully, as if in some tender reminiscence of her absent parent.

'But we are not talking about paps,—we are talking about hubs,' exclaimed Elfie, impatiently. 'We are cussing and discussing the best means of offence and defence against our natural enemies, meaning our future hubs—poor wretches!'

'I know,' said Erminie; gravely.

Then turning her soft eyes, that had strange mesmeric power in their steady tenderness, upon the face of Britomarte, she continued:

'And as I am not rich, as I have nothing at all of my own, no one will ever marry me for anything else but affection. And as I find it so sweet to depend on my dear father who loves me, I shall find it very sweet also to depend on another who shall love me—ah! if only half as well as he does!'

'I hope you will remain with your father, my darling. Fathers may be trusted with their daughters—sometimes. The same cannot be said of lovers, or husbands,' said Britomarte, earnestly, and laying her hand, caressingly, upon the bright heard that leaned against her bosom. 'Yes, I hope you will never commit that spiritual suicide of which I spoke.'

Erminie gently lifted her head from her

queen's bosom,—every motion of the fair girl was gentleness itself,—again she hesitated, and the bloom wavered on her face and settled into an intense blush, as she softly said:

'I do not agree with you, dear Britomarte. I cannot. Nor do I like discussions on this subject. It seems sacrilegious to speak so irreverently of the holiest mysteries in nature, for such indeed I deem love and marriage; and it seems like unveiling the holy of holies in one's own sacred bosom to give one's thoughts and feelings about them. Still when that which is to me is a divine truth, is assailed even by you, dear Britomarte, I must defend it, if necessary, by laying bare my own heart.'

'Defend it then my love. Come on! I shall mind your fencing about as much as I should the pecking of an excited turtle dove,' said the amazon, with an indulgent smile.

Yet again the bloom wavered and flickered on Erminie's sensitive cheek as she murmured, softly:

'I have been thinking of all you have said this morning; I have been listening to my heart, and it has told me this; To lose self in the one great vital love a true wife finds in a true husband, is not moral suicide, as you say, but the passing in another life—a double life—deeper, sweeter, more intense, and more satisfying than any known alone. To be content to be guided by his wisdom, and upheld by his strength, and comforted by his love—to have no will but his will, which she makes her own—this is not to be a nonentity, or weak, or silly, or childish, but to be identical with the husband's greater life—to be wise, strong, womanly. She passes into his life, becomes part and parcel of it. In losing herself she finds herself; in giving herself away she receives herself again—transfigured! Oh! Britomarte, I am not intellectual like you, but I do know, because my heart surely tells me, that the true wife and the true husband are one—one being on this earth, as they will be one angel in Heaven,' said the gentle girl, forgetting her timidity in her enthusiasm.

'Bosh!' cried Elfrida Fielding, in disgust, tearing and throwing away the withes of grass she had been winding around her fingers, emblematically of her method of managing natural enemies.

'Bah!' yawned Alberta Goldsborough, shrugging her shoulders.

'Have you seen many such unions in your short life, Erminie?' inquired Britomarte.

'No, I have not; but I know that all unions should be such! As for myself, I do not think I shall ever love; but I do know that I shall never marry unless I shall be sought by one whom I can love with all my heart and soul, and spirit; whom I can honour almost as I honour my Creator; and I can obey in word and deed, with such perfect assent of my will and understanding, that to obey his will shall be to have my own way!—one who shall be to me the life of my life, the arbiter of my fate, almost my God! Yes, that is what I feel I want, and nothing else in the universe will satisfy me! That is what every true woman wants, and nothing else in the universe will satisfy her! Oh! Britomarte—you who are woman's champion—you greatly bewray woman when you ascribe to the coercion of coarse human laws that divine self-abnegation and devotion which is the instinct and inspiration of her own heart!' exclaimed Erminie.

'The dove pecks sharply—her little beaks are keen,' said Britomarte, smiling. Then, speaking more gravely, she added: 'Women might be such angels, my darling, if men were such gods; but you will find few women willing to be so devoted, and fewer men to deserve such devotion. Men do not believe in woman's voluntary self-abnegation, and hence they coerce them by what you call coarse human laws, by what I call unjust, despotic, egotistical laws. I return to my point, darling. I hope that you will never marry.'

'I do not think I ever shall, since it is not likely that I shall ever meet with any one such as I have described,' said Erminie.

'Oh, no, that you will not, my dear,' said Elfie; 'but you will think you have met such a prodigy, and that will be all the same to you. You will some day run against some commonplace John Thompson or Tom Johnson whom you will take for a Crichton or a Bayard. You are booked for a grand passion, my dear. It is in your system and it must come out. It would kill you if it was to strike in. I pity you, poor child, for that thing don't pay. I know all about it; I've been all along there!'

'You, Elfrida?' exclaimed Alberta, with unusual interest for her.

'Yes, me, "Elfrida!" You had better believe it!'

'Tell us all about it.'

'I am going to. Well, you see when pap first brought me to this school to finish my education, we stopped in the city a few days to fit me out and show me the sights. One night he took me to see an opera. Hush, girls! I never was inside of an opera house before in my life; and you better believe I was dazzled by the splendour and magnifi-

ences around me, and found quite enough to do to ape and stare at the gorgeous decorations of the house and the beautiful dresses of the ladies, until the curtain rose. Then I whip, you horses! The opera was Lucia-di-Lammermuir, and the part of Edgar Ravenswood was performed by Signior Adriano di Berceiloni.'

At the mention of that name Britomarte became attentive.

'Now, whether it was the jaunty bonnet with the heron's feather, or the crimson tartan plaid, or the black velvet tunic coat, or the white cross gartered hose and buskins, or the music, or the man, or all together, I don't know; but I fell over head and ears in love with Edgar Ravenswood. Heavens! how I adored him! Don't frown, Britty. And ah! how I hated Lucia, who had the divine happiness of being wooed in strains of heavenly music by Edgar Ravenswood! And oh! how ardently I aspired to be a great prima donna, and play Lucia to that exalted being's Edgar. Alba, if you smile that way I'll bite you.'

'How did it end?' inquired Erminie.

'I'm going to tell you, Minie. I went home with my head all in a whirl; I had Berceiloni on the brain. Pap wanted me to come into the dining-room and take some supper. But faugh! After the divine life of music, buskins, love, heron's feather, romance and Ravenswood, the mere idea of eating was revolting to the last degree! But I made pap promise to take me to the opera the next night. "Why, daught., you are music mad," he said. "I am very fond of music, pap," I answered. Law, girls! he believed it was only the music! Our paps are very simple-minded people. Or else they have learned so much wisdom in their age that they have forgotten all they knew in their youth. Don't you think so, Alba?'

'Yes, but never mind about the old gentleman. Tell us of the signior.'

'Well, instead of feasting on a vulgar supper, I went to bed to feast on memories of the divine life of the opera and on hopes of living it over again on the next evening. Ah! how I worshipped the Signior Berceiloni! Ah! how I detested the Signora Colona! Ah! how I aspired to be a famous prima donna! I felt capable of dying for Berceiloni, of choking Colona, and of running away from pap to become a prima donna. I was in the last stage of illusion, hallucination, mania! Don't glower at me so, Britty! or I can't go on. Ah! if our paps did but know, it is not always safe to take every one of us to such places!'

'Indeed it is not!' exclaimed Britomarte, so earnestly, so bitterly, so regretfully, with so dark a shadow overclouding her face, that little Elfie paused and gazed at her in dismay, faltering:

'Why, Britty, what is the matter? Surely you never—'

'No, no,' said Britomarte, recovering herself with an effort. 'I was never at an opera. Go on. How did it end?'

'How did it end? As a fourth of July rocket ends, of course. It streamed up from the earth a blazing meteor aspiring to the Heavens! It fell down to the ground a blackened stick, to be trodden under foot!'

'Ah!' sighed Erminie, in a voice full of sympathy.

Elfie laughed and went on:

'But to leave the bifaluting and come down to the common. It was very late when I got up next morning, and pap was as late as I was. And when we sat down to the breakfast table we found a party sitting opposite to us who were as late as we were. I didn't look at them. I was still in a dream, living in memories of the past evening and hopes of the coming one. In so deep a dream, that I didn't know whether I was breakfasting off an omelette or stewed kid gloves, until pap stooped and whispered to me, "Daught., there's the Signor Adriano di Berceiloni sitting opposite to us." I woke from my dream and raised my eyes to see. Was it Berceiloni? I looked and looked again before I could be sure. Yes, it was he! But oh! my countrymen, what a change was there! How like, yet how unlike my gorgeous hero of the evening before! His head was bald! his face was bloated! his form was round! Ugh! His eyes were red! his nose was blue! his teeth were yellow—ugh! ugh! He had a great plate of macaroni and garlic before him, and a great spoon in his hand, with which he shovelled the mess down his throat, as a collier shovels coal into a cellar—faugh! Whatever he had done to himself to make him look so differently on the stage, I don't know. But the sight of him *au naturel* made me sick and cured me.'

'And so that is the end of the story?' inquired Alberta.

'No, not quite. On one side of him sat a swarthy, scrawny signora, who was the wife of his "bussum." And on the other sat an equally swarthy and scrawny signorina, who was the lovely pledge of their wedded affections. And that's not all either, Alba. That evening pap said, "Well, daught., shall we go to the opera to see the Signior Berceiloni play Fra Diavolo?" I answered, "Thank you, pap, I had rather not." And so we went to church instead, to hear the celebrat-

ed Reverend Mr.—What's-his-name? Law! you know who I mean.'

'Did you fall in love with him?' inquired Alberta.

'Not as I know of! He may have had "a very beautiful spirit," as some of his admirers say; but, if so, it was clothed with a very unattractive person. Next day pap brought me here to school, and I have been here ever since, except when I have gone home for holidays. Now, sisteren, I have given in my experience at this love feast for the benefit of Sister Erminie Rosenthal; and I hope she will profit by it. And now, I think, that is all.'

Alberta and Erminie laughed, but Britomarte looked very grave as she said;

'No, Elfrida, that is not all! I have a sequel to your story; but I will not tell it to you now. I will tell you this, however: The old glutton who revolted your taste at the breakfast was not Signior Adriano di Bercelloni, the younger, whom you saw play Edgar Ravenswood.'

As Britomarte spoke, Elfie gazed at her with open eyes and mouth in silent amazement.

'They have the same name, and they bear a strong personal resemblance to each other, modified by the difference of age and temperament; but they never play the same parts. How could you imagine, my dear, that there could be any arts of the toilet, or effect of the stage, that could transfigure that coarse old creature into the hero of an opera?'

'I don't know. I thought toilet arts, and stage effects, were almost miraculous. But what astounds me is the cunning of that gay old deceiver, my pap! Now, I wonder if he didn't see my infatuation from the beginning! I wonder if he didn't show me the old one, and let me deceive myself, on purpose!'

'Of course he did,' opined Alberta.

'But how came you to know anything about them—so much about them, I may say, Britty dear?' Elfie inquired.

'I said I had a sequel to your story; but I cannot tell it now,' replied Britomarte, very gravely. Then, after a thoughtful pause, she added, 'I think it wrong—oh! very wrong—in parents and guardians to take young, inexperienced, impressible girls to such places. If they love music, let them have as many concerts as they please, but no operas and no plays—except, perhaps, a few of Shakespeare's best historical plays.'

'How old are you, Britomarte?' suddenly inquired Alberta.

Britomarte paused as though she could scarcely answer that question at a moment's warning; and then she answered—

'I am eighteen. Why?'

'You talk as if you were eighty—that's all.'

'I have had enough to age me,' said Britomarte, putting Erminie's caressing arms from her neck, and rising, and walking away, as if to conceal, or overcome, some strong and deep emotion.

'Britomarte speaks bitterly,' said Elfie, in amazement.

'She has good reason to do so,' replied Alba, meaningly.

'What reason?' inquired Elfie and Erminie in a breath.

'Law! don't you know? Have you never heard?'

'No.'

'Then I don't know whether I ought to tell it. It seems unfair to do so. It seems indeed like speaking ill of her family behind her back. She might not like it,' said Alberta, hesitating.

'Then don't do it,' urged Erminie.

'Do!' insisted Elfie.

'Well, you see, I never knew a word of it myself until last Easter holidays, when I was home on a visit, and heard it by the merest accident. For you know she never mentions a word about her family.'

'No, never; except sometimes to allude to the maiden aunt who pays her school bills. But do tell me! Is it anything bad?' eagerly inquired Elfie.

'Yes, very,' replied Alberta, with a shudder.

'And to think you should have known the secret ever since last Easter and kept it from us!' exclaimed Elfie, with a reproachful look.

'You see I kept it to myself for her sake,' explained Alberta, with an apologetic smile.

'Keep it so still, Alberta,' earnestly urged Erminie. 'If you have become possessed of any secret that you think Britomarte would not like to have divulged, it would be disloyalty to your friend to divulge it.'

'Bosh! It is all among friends, so what's the harm? Go on, Alberta. I am on thorns until I hear all about it. Was it a murder, or a forgery, or a bigamy, or an elopment, or an—or what was it?' eagerly questioned Elfie.

'It was neither of these. It was something far more— Where are you going, Erminie?' Alberta suddenly broke off in the middle of her sentence to ask of her fair companion, who had risen and was walking away.

'I am going out of hearing of a secret that

my friend might not like me to know,' answered the true-hearted girl, leaving Alberta to tell Britomarte's mystery to her only willing listener.

CHAPTER II.

THE MAN-HATER'S LOVER.

'A monarch mind, with mystery of commanding
A god-like power, an art Napoleon,
Of winning, fettering, moulding, wielding, banding,
The minds of millions till they move as one.

'While underneath that face, like summer ocean's,
Its lip as moveless and its cheek as clear,
Slumbers a whirlwind of the heart's emotions—
Love, hatred, pride, hope, sorrow—all save fear.'—*Halleck.*

Erminie sauntered slowly down the winding foot-path leading through the magnolia grove to the acacia avenue, on the banks of the river. She had not gone far when, a few paces in advance of her, she saw Britomarte walking alone.

Not wishing to intrude on the amazon in her dark hour, Erminie was turning away, when Britomarte by some means became aware of her presence, and looked back with an expression of ineffable tenderness, and beckoned her to approach.

The gentle girl went to the brilliant amazon's side, and was encircled by her arm.

'Thanks for letting me come, dear Britomarte,' she murmured, lifting her soft hazel eyes to meet the gaze of the splendid dark gray orbs that were shining down upon her.

'My bonny love, I never wish to avoid you. In my darkest hour, you are ever welcome to me,' answered the man-hater, in the soft tone and with the sweet smile she ever used in addressing this best beloved of her soul.

'You make me so happy when you say that, dear Britomarte, for I do love you so much that I long to come to you in all your moods, and most especially in your darkest hours, when my very heart aches with its longing to comfort you,' murmured Erminie, fondly caressing the hand that encircled her waist.

'My winsome pet, you talk to me as a girl talks to her accepted lover, in her days of hallucination. Well, long be it so, for I am the safest sort of a sweetheart for you, darling. Heaven grant you may never have another!' said Britomarte, earnestly.

'Oh, I never, never will, if you always love me as much as you do now, dearest, dear love! I will be as constant to you as ever woman was to man!' exclaimed Erminie so fervently, that Britomarte Conyers laughed; for occasionally such a bright flash of mirth lightened the dark eyes and played upon the thoughtful features of the beautiful amazon.

Erminie looked so grieved that Britomarte hastened to reply—

'My pretty darling, upon such conditions, if I were a man I could do but one thing.'

'What is that, Britomarte?'

'Marry you immediately,' smiled Miss Conyers.

'Oh, would you? Would you indeed, Britomarte? Would you marry me?' eagerly exclaimed Erminie, while her soft hazel eyes dilated and brightened with eagerness.

'I should feel obliged to.'

'And would you be satisfied to have me with you always, and would you always love me?'

The light of mirth faded away from the face of the brilliant amazon as she gravely replied—

'No, not if I were a man, for in that case I should have a man's half brutal, half-devilish, and wholly selfish nature. Sooner or later I should grow tired of you, and slowly or swiftly I should break your heart. The more you should love me, the more I should hate you; the more angel you, the more demon I; for I should be a man, and act out my "manly" part. Not being a man, however, I shall not hate you for loving me, nor kill you for serving me. Being a woman, I shall love you truly all your life, and shield you carefully from all men.'

'Thank you! thank you, dearest Britomarte! I know you will,' Erminie presently exclaimed, kissing the hand of her friend. But then growing grave, she added, 'Oh, my dearest love, I am so sorry you are such an intense man-hater! Your wholesale hatred makes you so unjust! It is the one dark spot upon the bright disc of your clear, warm, strong, sun-like nature! All men are not brutes, dearest Britomarte.'

'Then they are imbeciles! There is but one division.'

'What! Do you mean that all men are either brutes or idiots?'

'All!'

'How can you say so? There are some

living whom you must except and respect.'

'None!'

'Then there are some dead whose memories you must honour?'

'None!'

The word fell cold, hard and heavy from her lips as a bullet from its mould.

'Oh! Britomarte, how can you—can you—say so, dearest? You had a father.!'

Dark as a thunder cloud grew the beautiful face of the Amazon; harsh, curt and strange were the words of her reply.

'Yes; I had a father with little claim upon my love, and less upon my honour. Never name him to me again.'

Erminie was appalled.

Britomarte stopped in her walk and sat down at the foot of a tree, as if overshadowed by some dark destiny.

Erminie sank down at her feet and laid her head on her lap.

Both were silent for a time, and the only sounds that broke the stillness were the whispering of the leaves above their heads, the hum of the insects around them, and the ripple of the river below.

Erminie began to sob softly, while Britomarte laid her hand gently on her pet's head.

'Britomarte, dearest, I am sorry that I hurt you; I would not have done it for a kingdom, if I had known it.'

'I am sure you would not, darling!—sure you would not! Say no more about it, love; but tell me of your own father, who cannot come under my severe category because I do not know him; and tell me of that wonderful brother whom you idolize so much, and whom I have never seen.'

'My father and my brother,' murmured the minister's daughter, as her face softened into a yet more ineffable sweetness, as at the memory of cherished home affection—'My dear father and dear brother! Ah! Britomarte, if you had known them you would never have been a man-hater! When you do know them you will cease to be one!'

'Then a miracle will be performed,' said the beauty. 'But tell me, are they coming to the commencement?'

'I am not sure. That is to say, I know that one of them will come to fetch me home, for my father wrote to say so; but I am not sure which. Perhaps both may come. I hope they may. I want my dear father to be present to-day. A triumph is no triumph to me unless he witnesses it; and oh! I am so impatient to see my dear brother. I have not seen him, you know, since he left us, five years ago, for Gottengen.'

'Your brother is studying for Holy Orders I think you told me.'

'Oh, yes. He has a genuine call to the ministry of the Gospel if ever any man had one in this world. He has sacrificed the most brilliant prospects of earthly success to obey that call.'

'How is that, my dear?'

'Oh, why you know he is my father's only son, and except myself, his only child, for there are but two of us, my brother and myself. Justin is ten years older than I am, however, since I was but sixteen in May, and he will be twenty-six in August.'

'Yes; but about the sacrifice he made, my dear?'

'I am telling you. My dear brother and myself are the only children of the house of Rosenthal. My father's family is not what is called a marrying family. Father has two bachelor brothers, who are the great woollen importers. Uncle Friedrich has the Berlin house and Uncle Wilhelm the New York house. They offered to take Justin into their business, and bring him up as their successor; but he felt this call to preach the gospel, and he declined their offer.'

'It was a great sacrifice,' said Britomarte.

'It was; but our dear father encouraged him to make it. Oh, there are few like our father; and Justin is worthy to be his son! He has come home to stay now! And he is to be ordained this coming autumn! Oh, Britomarte, you must come and visit me then, and go with me to see his ordination.'

'I shall be pleased to do so, my dear! Listen! Yes, the bell is ringing! We must go and take our places on the platform. I suppose many of the friends of the pupils have arrived. What a pity it is they cannot see their charges until after the ceremonies,' said Britomarte, rising to retrace her steps towards the college buildings.

'Yes, it is a pity; but I suppose their earlier meeting is prohibited to prevent confusion and delay. I saw Alba's parents roll by in their open barouche, as I came down here. And there are Effie's father and two uncles riding up on horseback. And my dear father and brother, or both, will be here presently. But, Britomarte, who is coming for you?'

'No one. No one ever does come, nor do I wish that any should. I am contented, darling.'

'You are self-reliant! But, dear Britomarte, I will be near you, so do remember that one will watch your ordeal with as much interest as father, mother, sister and brother, all combined, could do: and will

mourn over your defeat, or rejoice over your victory more than over her own.'

'I do believe it, my darling! And therefore I take pleasure in assuring you that you shall have cause only for rejoicing. I shall achieve a victory, Erminie.'

'Yes! I never doubted that! I was always sure of that! What is your theme, dear Britomarte? You will not object to tell me, now that the reading is so near.'

'My dearest, I should not have objected to tell you at any period, if you had asked me to do so. My theme is the "Civil and Political Rights of Woman."'

'What a tremendnous subject! Britomarte, dear, you will be sent to Coventry by all the professors.'

'Perhaps! But do you think I shall go there?' laughed the beauty.

By this time they were approaching the colonade through the roseries, as the terraces, adorned principally with these beautiful flowers, were called. On the upper terrace they made a turn to the left, to avoid the carriages that were continually rolling up to the front entrance, depositing their freights and rolling off again.

The two friends entered a side door, and found themselves in a large ante-room, in which were assembled all their schoolmates in the festive school uniform of pure white muslin dresses, pink ribbons, and rose wreaths.

And among them walked Alba Goldsborough the blonde beauty and wealthy heiress, and Elfrida Fielding, the bright lit le brunette country-girl. Those two girls walked apart, with their arms around each other's waists, conversing in confidential whispers.

'They are still talking of Britomarte!' said Erminie, indignantly to herself, and as she looked at them her suspicion was confirmed; for as soon as they saw her with Britomarte they ceased to talk, and began to look embarrassed. But before the quartette of friends could meet, the great folding doors, separating the ante-room from the exhibition hall, were thrown open, and two of the teachers appeared to marshal the pupils to the scene of their approaching ordeal.

Promptly and quietly they fell into line and marched into the hall—a spacious room of the Corinthian order of architecture, fitted up as a temple of the muses—the nine muses being represented by nine statues supporting the arches, separating the platform from the part of the hall occupied by the audience.

This platform was provided with rows of benches covered with crimson cloth, for the accommodation of the pupils.

Up the side stairs leading to this platform, the line of pupils marched. They seated themselves on the benches in good order, and then surveyed the scene before them.

The hall was crowded with a large number of spectators, among which were to be distinguished learned professors, noted preache s and the heads of neighbouring colleges. But the great mass of the audience consisted of the parents and guardians, friends and relatives of pupils and teachers.

Alberta Goldsborough, the wealthy heiress recognised her stately papa and fashionable mamma, and saluted them with a cool, young ladyish bow as she sank into her seat.

Elfrida descried, seated away back in an obscure corner, the three honest country gentlemen whom she saucily designated 'one pap and two unks.' And she audaciously kissed her hand to them with a loud smack as she popped into her place.

Erminie discerned, near the middle of the crowd, her revered father and idolised brother, and exchanged with them a bow and smile of recognition and joy. But, oh, fate of Tantalus! though she had not seen her father for ten months, nor her brother for five years, she could not even turn to Britomarte and point them out; she could only bow and smile, for silence and decorum were rigidly enforced upon the pupils on the commencement day at Bellemont College.

Britomarte, with her sad eyes wandering over the assemblage, saw not one familiar face. But Britomarte was almost alone in the world.

The ceremonies of the day began.

Now, as there is nothing in this wearisome world half so wearisome to an uninterested spectator as a school exhibition or a college commencement, and as this anniversary at Bellemont partook of both characters, and consequently dispensed a double amount of dullness, I will spare my readers the details of the proceedings and dismiss the whole affair with as few words as possible.

Professors preached and pupils prosed on the platform; while the spectators fanned themselves vigorously, or yawned behind fans of every description, from the plain palm-leaf to the scented sandal wood, in the hall.

Teachers and scholars were alike in the highest state of exaltation and—the deepest degree of fatigue.

The audience politely pronounced the affair to be very interesting and—heartily wished it over.

In fact the exercises of the day were only redeemed from the most ordinary monotony

by the reading of Britomarte Conyers' theme—'The Civil and Political Rights of Women.'

At Bellemont College the themes were not read by the writers, because in that immaculate institution it was deemed unladylike for a young lady to stand upon a platform before a mixed audience and read her own composition aloud, and it was also thought that the embarrassment which a young writer would be likely to feel in such a position would seriously mar the delivery and detract from the effect of her theme. So it was arranged that all the themes should be read aloud by the Professor of Elocution to the Institution, whose highly cultivated style would certainly improve the poorest composition, and do full justice to the richest. He 'lent to the words of the poet the music of his voice.'

He read with great effect Britomarte Conyers' Essay on the Civil and Political Rights of Women, in which the author bravely asserted not only the rights of married women to the control of their own property and custody of their own children, but the rights of all women to a competition with men in all the paths of industry and a share with them in all the chances of success—in the mechanical arts, in learned professions, in commercial business, in municipal and national government, in the camp, the field, the ship; in the senate, in the cabinet, on the bench, and in the presidential chair. She supported her argument with the names and examples of the noteworthy women of all ages and countries—women, who in despite of the obstacles of law, precedent and prejudice, had distinguished themselves in every field of enterprise ever illustrated by men. It was altogether a clear, warm, strong, brilliant article; and, like all works of genius, it received an almost equal share of enthusiastic praise and extravagant blame. It was excessively admired for the strength, beauty and ingenuity of its argument, and bitterly censured for the heterodoxy of its doctrines.

Among those who listened to the reading was Justin Rosenthal, the brother of Erminie, who seated beside his father, gave the most earnest attention to the argument.

At its conclusion, he turned to the elder Rosenthal, and said:

'That is the most original, outspoken and morally courageous assertion of right against might that has been made since the immortal Declaration of Independence! And that it should have been written by a school-girl seems almost incredible. A rare, fine spirit—a pure, noble heart—a clear, strong intellect she has. I wonder who she is?'

'I do not know,' replied Doctor Rosenthal, for Erminie's father was a D.D.—'I do not know; but I do know that her argument, though ingenious, is wrong from beginning to end.'

'I beg to differ with you, sir.'

'What, do you agree with her?'

'Not perfectly; for a young, enthusiastic nature like hers is apt to exaggerate; but I do not think that her argument is "wrong from beginning to end." There is much of right, strongly asserted, in what she says; and I confess that she interests me so much as to pique my curiosity to see her.'

'I never heard you express any particular interest in any girl or woman before.'

'Because I never felt any.'

'Hush! they are about to read the names of the graduates.'

The graduates were, Britomarte Conyers, of Washington; Erminie Rosenthal, of Washington; Matilda Fielding, of Henrico; Alberta Goldsborough, of Richmond; and four other young ladies, whose names need not be mentioned, as they are nothing to this story.

Britomarte Conyers alone received the highest degree conferred by this college—that of Mistress of Arts.

Erminie Rosenthal, Matilda Fielding, and Alberta Goldsborough, and the four others, received the degrees of Mistresses of English Literature.

Next was announced the name of the successful candidate for the medal to be awarded for the best English theme. The medal was awarded to Britomarte Conyers, for her Essay on the Civil and Political Rights of Woman.

'Britomarte Conyers, then, is the author of that theme you admire so much, and is the young lady you are so curious to see. I congratulate you, Justin! Miss Conyers is your sister's most intimate friend. You will have an opportunity not only of seeing her, but of forming her acquaintance, under the most auspicious circumstances,' said Dr. Rosenthal.

'Nay,' smiled Justin, 'I do not know that I care to follow up any such acquaintance with the young champion of womankind. I merely wish to see and judge her as a rather singular specimen of her sex.'

As an aged man arose to deliver the valedictory, the father and son composed themselves to listen—that is to say, they resigned themselves to be bored.

At the end of the valedictory the audience was dismissed.

They adjourned to a spacious drawing-room, where at length the pupils were met

mitted to welcome their parents and guardians, friends and relatives.

There Alberta Goldsborough received a formal embrace from her fashionable mamma and a priceless set of pearls from her pompous papa.

There Elfrida Fielding was heartily hugged in turn by her 'pap and two unks,' and invested with a gorgeous garnet necklace, the joint offering of the three.

And there Erminie Rosenthal was folded successively to the bosom of her father and her brother, and received from the former a brooch made of his miniature painted on ivory, and set in opals, and from the latter a 'love of an opal ring.' Erminie thanked them with her warm caresses, not so much for the presents as for the priceless affection they bestowed upon her. But neither her revered father nor her idolized brother could long keep her thoughts from her beloved friend. She looked everywhere for Britomarte, but failed to discover her. The brilliant champion of woman, who had borne off alone the highest honours of the college, was nowhere to be seen.

'Oh, where is she? where is she?' murmured Erminie in distress, peering everywhere in the hope of seeing her goddess.

'Of whom are you speaking, my Minie?' inquired Dr. Rosenthal.

'Of my dear Britomarte—of Miss Conyers. Oh! she has achieved a proud triumph, but there is not one to rejoice over her, and meet her with affection and reward her with gifts—not one! Ah, I know she has gone away alone in bitterness of spirit! I do not wonder! I knew I should not care for any triumph, unless it was to please some one who loved me! But Britomarte might know that I rejoice with her. Oh, Justin, did you listen to the reading of her theme? Was it not glorious? What did you think of it?'

'I have just told our father that I think it the most original, out-spoken, and morally-courageous assertion of right against might that has been made since the immortal Declaration of Independence.'

'You do? You think so? Oh, I am so glad to hear you say it! I will tell Britomarte. You must know that I do not myself, quite agree with Britomarte's theories, but I do so much admire the power with which she treats every subject she touches. Now, father dear, let me go and look for her. She is alone somewhere.'

'Perhaps she prefers to be so, my Minie,' said the minister.

'No, sir, she does not; she never prefers solitude to her poor little Minie's company.'

'Go, then, my little girl.'

'And you will not feel that I am neglecting you in going to her?'

'Nonsense, my Minie!'

'And you, Justin, I wish to ask you a favour,' said Erminie, turning to her brother.

'What is it, my sister?'

'Let me give this ring to Britomarte from myself, you know. No one has brought her anything; no one has even come to see her. It is so sad!'

'Certainly, my pet! Do as you please with your ring,' smiled Justin.

'And you will not fancy that I slight you in giving it away? I would not give it, only my heart aches so for Britomarte.'

'No, no, you simple child! I hope I have better assurance of your affections than the keeping of a ring would be,' smiled the young man.

Erminie raised herself on tiptoe to offer him a kiss, which he stooped to accept, and then she flew off to find Britomarte. She searched for her in all the rooms, but after an hour's vain quest she returned disappointed to the drawing-room.

It was at the school ball of the evening that Justin Rosenthal was presented to Britomarte Conyers, whose personal beauty and grace made as deep an impression on his heart, as her genius had made upon his mind. At the same time and place, Colonel Eastworth, a distinguished son of South Carolina, was introduced to Erminie. And thus two of our young friends met the persons who were destined to exercise the most powerful influence over their future lives.

The next morning the school broke up for the midsummer holidays, and the pupils went their several ways. Elfrida Fielding went with her father and uncles to Sunnyslopes. Alberta Goldsborough accompanied her parents to their water-side villa. And the Rosenthals, with Colonel Eastworth and Britomarte Conyers, embarked on the steamer bound for Washington.

CHAPTER III.

A MYSTERIOUS LETTER.

'What see you in those papers that you lose
So much complexion? Look you how you change!
Your cheeks are marble! What read you there
That hath so dowarded and chased your blood
Out of appearance? Why how now?
—*Shakespeare.*

The barouche containing Dr. Rosenthal and his party reached the steamer in such good season, that the two young ladies had time to go down into the cabin and choose their berths from among those left vacant, and to make all arrangements for their comfort during the voyage. They took two berths in a state-room together, unpacked their travelling bags, laid their toilet articles in order upon the little shelf below the tiny looking-glass, and then returned to the deck.

They sat down on the side that still looked towards Bellemont College, whose white walls arose from amidst green foliage on the crest of a gentle hill at a short distance up the river. Half in joy at work accomplished and freedom gained, half in regret at leaving the school where they had been so happy for so many years, and teachers whom they had loved so well, the young friends gazed upon their late home.

The gentlemen of their party meanwhile walked up and down the deck, wondering when the steamer would start, and betraying all the impatience and restlessness of their restless and impatient sex, until, as they passed near the two young ladies, Justin Rosenthal left his companions, and with a bow and a smile, as if asking permission, or apologising for taking it for granted, seated himself beside Miss Conyers.

Britomarte would have given a year of her life to have repressed the blush that mantled over her cheek and brow as Justin took the seat beside her.

His first words were well chosen to set her at ease.

'The scenery of James River is quite new to me, Miss Conyers. We came down from Washington by railroad to Richmond, and thence by stage coach to Bellemont. I look upon this fine river for the first time,' he said, not, as before, fixing his eyes upon her, but letting them rove over the bright waters of the James and the verdant hills beyond.

Britomarte only bowed in reply. She would have given another year of her life for the power of controlling the unusual tremor that seized her frame and made it dangerous to trust her voice for a steady answer in words.

Justin still letting his eyes rove over the river and rest here and there upon particular points of interest in the scenery, spoke of the beautiful effects of the shifting light and shade as the clouds floated over the sun's disk and their shadows passed over the hills.

And Britomarte merely answered 'yes,' or 'no,' until, indignant at the influence that was growing upon her, she suddenly erected her haughty little head with an impatient shake, and said:

That she could not appreciate the minutiæ of river scenery; that only the ocean in its grandeur and might could awaken her admiration.

At this moment Dr. Rosenthal called to his son, and Justin, with a bow, left the side of Britomarte.

'Why, Britty, dearest! I always thought you loved river scenery,' said Erminie, when they were left alone together.

'So I do, as a general thing, but I don't care about it to-day,' answered Miss Conyers.

'Well, Britty, dear, I never knew you to be capricious before.'

'Nature has given me no immunity from the common weakness of human kind.'

Erminie looked so hurt at the curtness of her friends' words and manner, that Britomarte suddenly took her hand and tenderly caressed it.

Erminie, touched by this new proof of love, was encouraged to renew and press her invitation to Britomarte to go home with her to the parsonage.

Miss Conyers caressed her and thanked her, but reiterated her resolution to go to Witch Elms.

'Ah! don't, ah! don't—don't go to that horrid place, dear Britomarte! You don't know what it is! You have never been there, I believe?'

'No, never,' answered Miss Conyers, who had spent all her holidays at the school.

'Then you can't know what a horrid place it is, or what horrid stories are told about it!'

'Have you been there that you know so well?'

'No; but I've heard about it! Ah! I should not speak so of the home of your old relative, dear Britty; but it was for your sake! Forgive me, Britty.'

'Nonsense! tell me what these horrid stories are.'

'Oh! dear Britty, I am afraid.'

'Why?'

'You would be hurt and angry.'

'Nonsense again, my dear. I insist upon your telling me. I want to know something of the home to which I am going for the first time.'

'Well, then, Britty, they say—that the place is haunted.'

'Of course, they say every isolated old country house is haunted. What else?'

'That—the old lady who lives there, and who never goes to church or receives a visitor, and who has lived so long beyond the usual period of human existence, is really a witch, and has made a compact with the Evil One, who prolongs her life.'

'Ah! and what besides?'

'That on certain nights in the year, especially on All Hallows Eve, the most unearthly sights and sounds may be seen and heard, in and around that old house!'

'And all this in the nineteenth century! I am surprised that you should pay any attention to such ridiculous stories, my dear.'

'One must hear what is openly discussed in one's presence. I do not believe them any more than you do; but I think there must be something very wrong about a house of which such tales are told.'

'So do I, my dear Erminie. And that makes it incumbent upon me to go there at once. My poor old relative is ninety-seven years of age—that age is a sufficient reason for her isolation from general society. It often happens that a mistress, aged, infirm and solitary, becomes the victim of her attendants. The consideration of all these circumstances decides me to go at once to Witch Elms.'

'But—forgive me once again, dear Britomarte—are you expected or desired there?'

'I do not know. My old aunt has never written to me. The half-yearly payments for the schooling, for which I am indebted to her, always have been forwarded by her agent in Washington. On each occasion I have written to her a letter of thanks; but I have never received an answer.'

'Oh, Britomarte, how much more desolate you are than I ever imagined! Dear Britomarte, come home with me and be my sister,' entreated Erminie, with the tears welling up into her soft, hazel eyes.

'I must go and report myself at Witch Elms and thank my old aunt for all her liberality to me.'

'And afterwards?'

'I shall be guided then, as now, by duty.'

While she spoke the boat was getting up her steam, and now the bell changed out its warning that all loiterers were to hurry on board, and all intruders to hurry on land before the boat should commence her voyage.

In an instant all was confusion with the crowds of people hastening to and fro.

In the midst of the melee, a boy came hurrying up on deck, and looking about as though in search of some one whom he was extremely anxious to find. As his glance lighted upon Britomarte he ran up to her and thrust a letter into her hand, exclaiming:

'Ah, Miss, I'm so glad I got here in time! dough I'm mos' out'n breat. It come, de letter did, 'bout half 'n 'hour arter you lef', and I run all de way wid it.'

'Thank you, Tim; you are a faithful little friend,' said Miss Conyers opening her purse, and giving him a shilling from its slender store.

The boy, grinning with delight, as much at the kind words as at the coin, ducked his head with an awkward bow, and ran away, to get clear of the boat before she should leave the pier.

Britomarte opened her letter, and turned to the signature.

And her face was suddenly blanched to the hue of death, and she reeled as though about to fall.

'Britomarte, dear Britomarte, what is it? Any bad news?' anxiously exclaimed Erminie.

But Miss Conyers raised her hand with a silencing gesture, and arose to go down below. She trembled so much as she moved, that Erminie started forward to attend her. But with a repelling motion the pallid girl stopped her friend, and hurried alone on her way.

The boat steamed off from the pier, and the passengers began to look for seats. Dr. Rosenthal, Colonel Eastworth and Justin came and placed themselves near Erminie.

'Where is your friend, my love?' inquired the doctor.

'Down in the cabin. A boy from the school came running to bring her a letter, which has agitated her very much indeed,' replied Erminie.

'Had you not better go and see if you can do her any good, my love?' inquired the doctor.

'Oh, no! Dear papa, you don't know Britomarte. I started up to follow her down, but she stopped me with such a look, and such a gesture!'

'What is the nature of the news that she has received?' inquired Justin, with an expression of deep interest.

'Ask the contents of the next bulletin from France to England, and I can answer you as well. All I know is that the letter has overwhelmed Britomarte me with agitation and affliction,' replied Erminie, looking ready to burst into tears.

'I am sorry—truly, truly sorry—that anything should have occurred to one of your friends, so much to distress you,' said Colonel Eastworth, in a low and earnest tone.

The colour deepened on Erminie's cheeks, but she did not reply.

All the morning the Thetis steamed down the river. At the dinner hour Erminie was very glad of the excuse to go down into the state-room she occupied in common with Britomarte, to take off her bonnet and mantle, and brush her hair, to go to the public table.

She opened the door timidly.

Miss Conyers was lying on the upper berth, with the curtains drawn before her.

'Britomarte, dear Britomarte, how are you? Can I do anything for you?' murmured Erminie, stealing to the berth, and cautiously lifting a corner of the curtain.

'No! don't speak to me! leave me!' was all that Miss Conyers replied, and in a voice so hoarse as to be nearly inaudible.

Pale with pity and with awe, Erminie dropped the curtain, and sank into the one chair their little den boasted.

She sat there quite still, and forgetting to prepare for dinner until the bell clanged out its invitation to the table, and aroused her from her trance of trouble.

Then she hastily arose, threw off her bonnet, shook back her auburn ringlets, and hurried out to join her father and his friends, who were on their way to the dining-room.

Much concern was expressed by them that Miss Conyers was not able to come to dinner.

Once again in the course of that afternoon Erminie went to the state-room to implore Britomarte to take some refreshment.

Then Miss Conyers suddenly drew the curtain back, and turned upon the intruder a face so pale and ghastly in its grief and horror, that Erminie shrank back appalled.

'Don't you see that it takes the whole power of my will to hold body and soul together until I get to New York?'

'To New York!' repeated the panic-stricken girl.

'Yes—I can do no more. I cannot eat, or drink, or talk—much. I can only manage to live until I get there. Leave me.'

'Oh! Heaven of Heavens, what has happened to you, Britomarte!' exclaimed Erminie, as she turned unwillingly, to leave the state-room.

Not until the hour of retiring did the gentle girl again enter the state-room occupied by the sullen and solitary mourner. She softly lifted a corner of the curtain, and looked into Britomarte's berth.

Miss Conyers was lying with her face to the wall, so still and breathless that Erminie became alarmed, fearing that the miserable one might have died alone.

'Britomarte, dear Britomarte, oh! please speak to me. How are you now?' she softly murmured.

'I am holding body and soul together with all my might. If you love me, let me alone,' answered Miss Conyers.

'The Lord comfort you, Britomarte, for it seems that I cannot,' gently murmured Erminie, dropping the curtain.

Then she knelt and prayed, and then undressed and went to bed, or rather turned into her berth.

But she could not sleep; she lay thinking of Britomarte, wondering what could be the nature of the blow that had stricken her down she suddenly, and listening for any sound or motion from the berth above her, and growing more nervous at the dead silence and stillness overhead than she could have been made by the most uneasy moanings and tossings. At length toward morning, Erminie, worn out with fatigue, fell into a deep sleep. Rocked by the motion of the boat, she slept long and soundly, until at last she was awakened by the sudden cessation of all motion, and the loud sound of blowing off steam.

With a start she sprang up and rubbed her eyes. Her first thought was of Britomarte.

But what was her astonishment, on drawing back the curtain, to behold the beautiful amazon up and dressed, and standing before the little looking-glass, putting the last finishing touch to her toilette.

'Oh, Britomarte, dearest, I am so glad to see you up,' Erminie exclaimed.

'We are at Alexandria,' was the answer, in a voice so strangely low and level, that Erminie saw she had no great cause for congratulation.

She got up and dressed quickly, and opened the door to leave the state-room, when Britomarte called to her:

'Erminie, if you love me, see that your friends take no notice of my—my disturbance.' She brought these words out as with the greatest reluctance and difficulty, and then added, as if in explanation or apology: 'I could not stand questioning or sympathy from any one, this morning.'

'Be easy, dear love; you shall not be in the slightest degree annoyed. Shall you come to breakfast?' said the affectionate girl, lingering at the door, and glad to be spoken to by her idol.

'Yes.'

'Then I will wait for you.'

'Thank you, dear; I would rather you would.'

Gladly Erminie closed the door, and sat down on the side of her berth, while Britomarte completed some packing with which she was engaged.

Then they went out upon deck together. Erminie left her friend seated under the awning in the after part of the boat, and went forward to speak to her father and his friends, who were grouped together engaged in what seemed a very interesting conversation.

After a few minutes' talk with them, Erminie, attended by the whole party, returned to the spot where she had left Britomarte.

The gentlemen greeted Miss Conyers as though nothing unusual had happened.

And then they all went down to breakfast Eastworth escorting Erminie and Justin attending Britomarte.

Miss Conyers took a single cup of coffee with one biscuit. But for the warning given by Erminie, Britomarte's paleness, silence and abstemiousness must have occasioned remark. As it was, she was passed over unnoticed, except by the usual polite attentions of the breakfast table.

Before the breakfast was over the boat had started. And by the time our party got up on deck, she was well under way.

In something less than half an hour after this, the Thetis landed at her pier at Washington.

And the great bustle of arrival ensued.

'My dear Miss Conyers,' said Dr. Rosenthal, 'I understand from my daughter that you have positively declined making us a visit; but now, at the last moment, let me prevail with you to make us all happy by consenting to go home with us at least for a day and night, if no longer, to rest before you go farther.'

'I thank you very much—more than I can express. But it is not in my power to accept your kind invitation. Urgent business compels me immediately to go to New York. I know that a train leaves in an hour from this. And I must drive to the station instantly.'

Britomarte spoke with the difficulty and hesitation she had exhibited in talking ever since the falling of that mysterious blow.

'What can I do for you, then? Speak and command me,' said the old minister, kindly.

'Only have a cab called, and I shall be much obliged to you.'

'Dear Britomarte,' said Erminie through her tears, 'tell me at least when you will return to Washington.'

'I do not know, my love,' replied Miss Conyers.

'You will write to me?' said Erminie, in a pleading tone.

'Perhaps, darling; but I cannot even promise that.'

'Well, you will leave me your address, so that I can write to you.'

'No,' answered Britomarte.

At that moment Dr. Rosenthal returned to the boat to announce that the carriages were waiting for Britomarte and for his own party.

Miss Conyers thanked the old minister, embraced Erminie, who was bathed in tears, and then turned to shake hands with Mr. Justin Rosenthal.

But, raising his hat with a grave bow, Justin said:

'I will see you to the station. Eastworth and my father are a sufficient body guard to Erminie.'

And before the beautiful man-hater could object he had taken her hand and was leading her from the boat.

He placed her in the carriage, entered and took a seat by her side, and gave the order to drive to the Baltimore railway station.

All this was done in spite of Britomarte's tacit protest. He did not, however, obtrude his conversation upon her. The drive was finished in silence.

On their arrival at the station, he procured her ticket, checked her baggage, and then placed her in one of the most comfortable seats in the ladies' car.

Even then he did not leave her, but remained stationed by her until the shrill, unearthly whistle of the engine warned him to leave.

Then bending over her, he took her hand and whispered low:

'Miss Conyers, I never utter vain or hasty words. What I speak now, I speak earnestly from the depth of my heart. In me you have a friend through good report and evil report, through life and death, through time and eternity. I have never spoken these words to any human being before this; I never shall speak them to any other after this. Good-bye, we shall meet again in a happier hour.'

CHAPTER IV.

THE WITCH OF WITCH ELMS.

The wild wind sweeps across the dreary moors,
And makes a weary noise and wailing moan,
All night we hear the clap of broken doors
That on their rusty hinges grate and groan,
And then old voices calling from behind
The worn and wormy wainscot flapping in the wind.—*Thomas Miller.*

Who are these,
So withered and so wild in their attire,
That look not like th' inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on it?—You should be—women.—*Shakespeare.*

After seeing Britomarte well on her way, Justin walked thoughtfully home to the parsonage.

That parsonage was an old-fashioned red brick cottage, standing back from the street in the midst of a well-shaded garden. Very comfortable it was, both within and without.

At least so thought Eastworth, when, at the close of the day, he sat with Erminie in the vine-covered and rose-wreathed piazza, apparently watching the twinkling of the stars through the upper foliage of the trees, and listening to the chirping of the insects in the dewy grass. I said apparently, for in truth I believe he saw only the tender light in Erminie's soft hazel eyes, and heard only the gentle rise and fall of her bosom.

Ever the same old 'o'er true tale.' But if these two were a pair of lovers, they seemed to be holding a Quaker meeting, from which the spirit was absent, for neither the one nor the other was moved to speak, although they were alone, or perhaps because they were alone.

Whether they would have continued sitting side by side in silence for the whole evening will never be known, for when they had sat thus for only an hour, the hall door opened, and Dr. Rosenthal and Justin sauntered out and joined them.

Dr. Rosenthal brought his pipe, which he always first lighted and then asked permission to smoke, which was always granted him. Now he walked up and down the piazza, puffing away with great satisfaction to himself.

Justin took a seat near his sister.

Now Erminie was not so much absorbed in her new admirer as to forget her old love. She felt deeply anxious about Britomarte.

'What time do you think she will get into New York, Justin, dear?' she inquired of her brother.

'Not before eleven o'clock to-night, my child,' answered Justin.

'Not before eleven? How far do you think she is on her way now?'

'She is near Philadelphia, my dear.'

'Oh! and only think of her having to travel by night between Philadelphia and New York, and arrive a stranger and alone in that Babylon of a city! It is dreadful, Justin!' And Erminie shuddered.

'Do not be alarmed for your friend, my dear. You know Miss Conyers better than I do—or, no, I didn't mean to say that, because it is not true; but—you have known Miss Conyers longer than I have, and you ought to know that of all women, she is perhaps the best capable of taking care of herself,' replied Justin.

'Ah, but Justin, you don't consider that out of books and out of the schoolroom, she is as inexperienced as I am myself. Fancy she was placed at Belmont College when she was ten years old, and has been there eight years!'

'Is it possible?' exclaimed Justin, in what seemed delight as well as surprise; 'is that possible? And yet she impresses me with the idea of one who has had much and bitter experience.'

'So she does me, and so she does every one; but whatever those experiences have been, they have been pressed into the first ten years of her life.'

'I am glad—I am very glad to hear that!' exclaimed Justin, with a deep sigh of relief, as if then, for the first time, some intense weight was thrown off his heart.

'Yes, and whatever that household mystery is that overshadows the life of Britomarte and makes her a man-hater, it is something in which she could never have been an actor, but only a sufferer, since whatever it is, belonged to her childhood, almost, we may say, to her infancy.'

'I am very, very glad to hear you say that, Erminie! But—in those eight years, has she never left the school for any length of time?—never for a few weeks, at the Christmas and midsummer holidays?' questioned Justin, very anxiously. He was like a very zealous advocate drawing out a witness for the defence.

'She has never been absent from Belmont for a day in eight years. I can speak from personal knowledge, for the last five years I have been her class-mate, and from the undoubted testimony of others who were with her during the three years she passed there before my entrance at the college.'

'I am happy to hear it!' exclaimed Justin so emphatically that Erminie broke forth impulsively with the exclamation:

'Why, surely, Justin, you never did Britomarte the injustice to suppose that she was to blame?'

'No!' burst forth Justin, with startling energy; "it is for her sake, thinking of the weight these facts will have with others, that I am glad.'

'If it is not an indiscreet question, what is the nature of this mystery we are discussing?' inquired Colonel Eastworth, aside, of Dr. Rosenthal, who had paused near the group.

The old minister removed his pipe and shook his head, and gave no other answer.

Justin who had overheard the inquiry, replied.

'This mystery, do you ask? We do not know. It is a whisper, a shadow, the slime of a serpent; but what may be the meaning of the whisper, substance of the shadow, or the nature of the serpent, no one seems to know. If you please, Eastworth, we will drop the subject.'

This ended the talk, and as very early hours were kept at the parsonage, the party soon separated and retired to rest.

Erminie had no sister or friend to sit and gossip with, after the manner of girls, for half the night, before going to sleep; so she lay silently in her white draped bed, dreaming over the events of the last two days.

Yes, but two days ago she was a light-hearted school girl, fancy-free; with no deeper love to trouble her life than that she bore her father and brother and her friend Britomarte.

'Now, one has [illegible] within her breast
The keen and [illegible]
But with life [illegible]

Alas for the p[illegible]—He was older than she by [illegible] twenty years, but with her in whose love reverence was so large an element, his superiority in age was an advantage. He was an eminently handsome man, and to her artistic soul his manly beauty was a great attraction. He was an accomplished gentleman and a military hero, and to her, in whom hero worship was a master passion, his military heroism was irresistible.

But it was not for all these alone—nor for the extrinsic halo of fame that crowned him—but for all these in addition to the intrinsic qualities which won the crown of fame, that she loved him; and lay awake to think of him, finding memories of his past sweeter than any sleep, reveries of his future brighter than any dreams.

What did he think of her? Did he approve her? Was it possible that he could love her! Those were the questions that troubled her most; for she could not answer them satisfactorily to herself. His eyes expressed admiration; his voice betrayed tenderness; but his words told nothing.

Suddenly, in the midst of her speculations she remembered Britomarte, and reproached herself for allowing any other person to occupy her thoughts to the exclusion of that queen. And she composed herself to pray for Britomarte's safety; and so praying—fell asleep.

Days passed; but no news came of Miss Conyers. Eastworth remained at the parsonage; wooing the minister's daughter—never with compromising words—but with glances more eloquent and tones more expressive than words could ever be. For if his words were only—'The day is beautiful,' his tone said, 'I love you?' his glance said, "For you are more beautiful than the summer's day.' And Erminie! how entirely she believed in him; how devotedly she loved him; how disinterestedly she worshipped him.

'If I could in any way add to his fame, or honour, or happiness, how blessed I should be! And oh! if he should go away without ever telling me what I could do to please him, how wretched I should become! Ah! he may meet more bea[illegible] more accomplished and more distin[illegible]omen in the great world than [illegible] to be, but he will never mee[illegible] could love him more than I do!

Such reveries as these, scarcely taking the form of words even in her thoughts, engaged the young girl constantly.

In the midst of this trouble came letters from the Goldsboroughs. One from Papa Goldsborough to Papa Rosenthal, inviting him, his family and his guest to come down to the Rainbows on a visit for the season; and another from Alberta to Erminie, urging her to use her influence with her father to induce him to accept the invitation and be at the Rainbows to spend the approaching Fourth of July.

No interference on the part of Erminie was needed. Dr. Rosenthal, with the concurrence of his son and his guest, wrote to Mr. Goldsborough to say that he and his party would be at the Rainbows on the evening of the third proximo. And as this letter was dated on the thirteenth of June, there were but two days left to prepare for the journey.

As soon as this letter was written and posted and fairly on its way, Erminie went

to look for her brother in the library, where in study he passed his mornings.

'Justin, do I interrupt you?' she inquired in a deprecating tone, as she opened the door and found him at his books.

'No, my dear, you never do,' replied Justin, closing the volume in his hand and drawing forward a chair for his sister.

'Justin, I want you to do something for me this afternoon, please,' she said, as she seated herself.

'What is it, dear?'

'Oh, Justin, it is now four weeks since Britty went away and we have heard nothing from her, and we do not know where to address her.'

'Well, my dear?'

'And to-morrow evening we start for the Rainbows, to be absent from this city for the whole remainder of the season.'

'Yes.'

'But, Justin, I cannot, indeed I cannot bear to go away without first trying to find out something about my dear Britomarte.'

'Well?'

'And so I wish you, if you please, to get a carriage and take me across Bennings Bridge to Witch Elms, to ask about her.'

'Well, dear I will think about it.'

'Oh, Justin, there is no time to think! there is only time to act! we go away so soon. Ah, Justin, how can you be so cool about it, you who profess to think so much of Britomarte?'

'I do think so much of her, so highly of her, that I have perfect confidence in her ability to take care of herself, and so I am not uneasy.'

'But I am! I am!—very uneasy! and I must try to find out about her.'

But Miss Convers decidedly discouraged all interference in her affairs.

'I know she did; but I cannot bear this anxiety any longer, and I will not leave the city without trying first to get some news of B t y!' exclaimed Erminie, almost ready to cry with excitement.

'Quiet yourself, my sister, for if you so much desire it I will get a carriage and take you to Witch Elms this afternoon,' said Justin, kindly.

'Oh, thank you—thank you, dear brother. You are always so good to your poor little sister. Now I will go away and not interrupt you any longer, so you can read all the remainder of the morning and have more time to go with me in the afternoon,' said Erminie, and she kissed him and hurried away.

The dinner hour at the parsonage was five o'clock. And it was six before Erminie retired from the table, leaving the gentlemen at their wine. On this afternoon Justin arose, and excusing himself to his father and their guest, accompanied his sister from the room.

The carriage that had been ordered from the livery stable near was at the door.

And Erminie hastily put on her bonnet and mantle and joined her brother in the hall, and was handed by him into the carriage.

'Drive to Bennings Bridge,' was the order given by Justin as soon as he had taken his seat beside Erminie.

The carriage started.

'There is a very dark cloud rising in the west, Justin dear. I hope there is not going to be a storm; what do you think?'

'I think there will be a storm, Erminie; but it need not disturb you in the least. I never break an appointment on account of the weather.'

'We are not exposed; but the horses, the driver?'

'Oh, ay! I fancy they will survive it.'

Something of a stoic in his own person, Justin had but little sympathy with the effeminacy of others.

The carriage rolled on its way for three good miles before it reached the Eastern Branch of the Potomac and entrance to Bennings Bridge.

There they stopped to pay the toll.

'After we get to the other side, will you know what road to take?' inquired Justin of his sister.

'Indeed, no; but we can ask the keeper here,' said Erminie.

'Can you direct us the way to Witch Elms?' inquired Justin of the man who was giving him his change.

'What?' screamed the old fellow, making a scoop of his hand, and placing it behind his ear to catch the sound.

'The way to Witch Elms?' repeated Justin.

'Which?'

'Witch Elms?' bawled Justin.

'Oh!—Lor'!' exclaimed the toll-taker.

'What's the matter?'

'Sure you'll never go there?'

'Why not?'

'Such a place!—no one ever does?'

'Can you tell me the way?'

'Oh, ay, if you will go! You follow the road leading straight out from the bridge, up hill and down, through the Big Woods for two or three miles, and then turn to your left. It lays there-a-way somewhere; but you better ax again when you get into that neighbourhood.

'Thank you. This is satisfactory,' said Justin.

'But, I say, there seems to be a storm a coming up, stranger; so if you're a travelling, you better put up for the night somewhere, and not try to get on to Witch Elms to-night,' screamed the old man, as loudly as if he thought that his interlocutor was as deaf as himself.

'Thank you again. I am not afraid of the weather!' said Justin, closing the blind of the carriage window, as he signalled the driver to go on.

The sky was growing dark with clouds and the air audible with thunder.

'Justin, I will not insist upon going on. If you please, we will turn back,' said Erminie.

'My sister, it is better to brave the thunder storm, which will be but a transient inconvenience, than to endure, for an indefinite time, the keen anxiety you say you must feel, unless you get tidings of Miss Conyers.'

'That is true,' sighed Erminie, subsiding into her cushions.

'Drive fast!' called out Justin to the coachman.

And the horses were put upon their mettle. And they went on with great speed for a mile or two, when Justin thought it was time to pull up and look at the weather and inquire the way.

Darker grew the sky, deeper growled the thunder, and faster fell the rain-drops.

'If we could only reach the old place before the storm actually bursts upon us, we might remain there until it subsides, and ride home by moonlight. The moon rises, I think, about half-past nine,' said Justin.

'Which way now, sir?' inquired the coachman, touching his hat to Mr. Rosenthal, as that gentleman looked out of the window.

'I am looking for some one of whom to inquire,' replied Justin, glancing up and down the gloomy forest road.

An old negro man soon loomed from the obscurity, driving a belated cow before him.

'Old man,' said Justin, 'can you tell me how far it is to Witch Elms?'

'De Lor'!' exclaimed the old fellow, in a tone of consternation.

'What's the matter?' demanded Justin.

'You nebber gwine dar, marser?'

'Yes, I am!'

'Well, Lor' bress your soul, marser, I 'vises ob you no to go dar!'

'Why?'

'Umph—umph, marser! Don't ax me, honey, but take my 'vice!'

'Can you direct me the way to get there?' demanded Justin, throwing him a piece of silver.

'Take your money, honey,' said the old negro, tossing back the coin into the chaise. 'It 'ould be bad money, chile! If you mus' go you mus' go! Well, it's right straight ahead; 'bout half a mile, or dar abouts, you comes to a old broke down barn, where you will see a old grass-growed road, dat go right across a old field, beyant which the ground slopes downwards inter de woods agin in which is the house you is arter. De Lor' help you, marser, and it getting dark and stormy!'

'Thank you, old man! Drive on, coachman!'

'Gee up, marser!'

'What now?'

'I gwyne warn you as how, when you gets to de barn, as you can't go much furder'n 'cross de ole fields in de carriage, 'cause ob de road through de woods being choked up like wid fallin' trees here and dere; so if you mus' go to de house—Lor' keep you!—you'll have to leave de carriage and horses under de shelter ob de barn and walk it.'

'Thank you once more, old man. Drive on, coachman,' said Mr. Rosenthal.

And the carriage started, leaving the negro standing by the roadside, bowing and waving his hat.

'All agree in their estimation of our enterprise, Erminie; and this really begins to look like an adventure!' laughed Justin, as he settled himself back in his seat.

The carriage rolled on its way for about half or three quarters of a mile further, when the coachman suddenly pulled up the horses and exclaimed—

'Here we are at the old barn, sir.'

Justin looked out. The sky was very dark; but a sudden glare of lightning showed a dilapidated barn, a broken fence and a bare field, bounded at the further end by the woods.

'We must stop here. Tuck up your dress, and give me your hand,' said Mr. Rosenthal, opening the carriage door and standing ready to help his sister out.

'Oh, Justin, it really does seem to me as if you wished to punish me for my persistence in taking me out in this storm,' said Erminie, half laughing and half crying, as she gave him her hand and sprang from the carriage.

'Not at all. I only want to convince you that on land, the weather is of little consequence. There is not one person in a million ever struck by lightning or drowned by rain,' answered Justin, as he hoisted a

large umbrella and tucked his sister under his arm.

'And what, ever, will Miss Pole think of us, coming to call upon her at such an hour and in such a storm?' exclaimed Erminie.

'And that is another thing which is of little consequence, what Miss Pole thinks of us,' answered Justin, as he stopped a moment to remove some fallen posts from a gap in the open fence to take his sister through.

'Ah, dear me, this is very odd,' sighed Erminie as, assisted by her brother, she made her way through.

'My good little sister, to hear you talk, one would naturally suppose that I had originated this adventure and compelled you to embark upon it; whereas the truth is, you came into the library where I was quietly reading, and coaxed and blustered me into bringing you out here. However, I forgive you! And I also assure you, that as you are not easily soluble in water, the rain won't melt you!'

Erminie laughed; and Justin turned towards the coachman, saying:

'Tompkins, you had better drive under the shelter of the broken barn and remain there until we return. We shall not be gone more than an hour at the longest.'

The coachman touched his hat and gladly obeyed.

And Justin and Erminie, arm in arm, under the shelter of a large umbrella, trudged across the old fields. The rain fell fast, the thunder rolled and the lightning flashed. And Erminie shrank and cowered to her brother's side and was upheld and encouraged by his strength and cheerfulness. Only at intervals by flashes of lightning could they see the way before them.

They stumbled on under the black sky and over the rough ground as well as they could, until they crossed the field and reached the other broken fence, which separated it from the woods.

Justin helped Erminie through the gap, as a glare of lightning showed them the continuation of the road.

This road was grass-grown and obstructed, and narrowed until it was nothing more than a foot-path through the thicket.

The rain was now pouring in torrents; but the meeting boughs over their heads kept it off them.

On and on they struggled through the woods, until at length they came to a gloomy opening, from the midst of which loomed up among shadows, like a denser shadow, a huge, dark building, surrounded by fences and fallen sheds. No light was visible from any part of the premises. Justin waited until a flash of lightning showed the gaping gateway, where the fallen gate lay upon the ground.

'Oh! what a place! Oh! what a home for Britomarte!' gasped Erminie, with a shiver, as they walked over the prostrate gate into the yard.

Justin replied; but the rolling of the thunder and the roaring of the wind drowned the sound of his voice.

Holding Erminie tightly under his arm, he groped his way towards the front of the house, when again the terrible fire of Heaven flashed forth and showed him the great old-fashioned double oaken door, with a projecting roof above it.

Drawing Erminie close along with him, he went up the mouldy stone steps leading to this roofed door, and felt about until he got his hand upon the iron knocker, with which he sounded an alarm that might have waked the dead. It only waked the dogs, shut up within the house, who opened a fierce fire of barks.

'Oh, dear, dear me, Justin! I wish we had not come!' gasped Erminie, clinging closer to her brother's arm.

'I like it, my dear. It looks quite like an adventure!' laughed Justin.

'Yes; like an adventure that might end in a —— Oh! bless the dogs! I can't hear myself speak for them!' exclaimed Erminie, impatiently breaking off amid the yelps of the canine sentinels.

'Hush! there is some one coming at last,' whispered Justin, as steps were heard approaching and a voice growling:

'Down, Fangs! Be quiet, Throttler! What do you mean then, Bloodymouth? Down, all of you!'

And these commands being enforced with hearty kicks and cuffs, order was soon restored in the house.

Then came a sound of grating keys and shooting bolts and falling bars and rattling chains, that all seemed to be the manifold fastenings of the old oaken door.

'Gracious me, is the old place a dungeon, guarded by bloodhounds?' whispered Erminie, quivering with excitement.

Before Justin could answer the door opened, and a cautious voice spoke from the darkness.

'Is that you, Doll?'

'No, it is not Doll, whoever Doll may be,' answered Justin.

There was silence for a moment, during which the door was held carefully. Then the voice from behind it spoke again:

'Who a' a you?'

'A friend of Miss Conyers,' answered Justin.

'What do you want?' was the next question.

'First of all to get in out of the storm,' answered Justin, impatiently, and at the same time suddenly pushing the door open, and drawing his sister into the hall after him.

The door as suddenly clanged to, and they found themselves in utter darkness and apparent solitude.

'Well, upon my word, if variety is the spice of life, this is one of the most pungent of the spices! I say!—you!—waiter! footman! hall-porter! whatever you are! where are you?' exclaimed Justin, holding Erminie close to his side, and groping along the wall.

There was no answer.

'Where are you, I say?' thundered Justin, waking the echoes of the old house.

His voice died away amid profound silence.

'Oh, Justin!' moaned Erminie.

'Don't be alarmed, my dear; you are perfectly safe,' whispered her brother.

'Let us try to get out,' she pleaded.

'I will try at least to open the door,' said Justin, groping his way to the front of the hall, 'and the lightning will show us where to find another door, perhaps,' he continued, as he felt about the oaken boards until he got hold of the lock. It was a spring lock, and resisted all his efforts to unfasten it.

'Well, really, this is very pleasant! I say, you! Cerberus! Dogqueller! Mantrapper! Where are you! Answer for yourself!' exclaimed Justin.

But the resounding echo of the old building was the only response he got.

Erminie was clinging and trembling and cowering at his side.

'What in the world are you afraid of, my dear? This is a sulky, inhospitable house' and that is the worst that can be said of it, I suppose,' laughed Justin, to re-assure his sister. He was next to the dark wall, feeling his way along its length, in the hope of finding another door at which to knock. He was feeling his way with his left hand, while Erminie hung upon his right arm.

His hand found nothing but a ragged wall; his feet came plump against an obstruction. Stooping down, he felt about, and found that he was at the foot of a flight of stairs.

'Come, Erminie, we will ascend and pursue this adventure,' he said, laughing.

Partly because they had to go so slowly and cautiously, and partly because their footsteps were naturally light, they went up stairs noiselessly, Justin holding on to the balustrades with one hand, and guiding Erminie with the other, until they reached the upper hall.

Still all was dark as the grave and silent as death.

'Justin,' whispered Erminie, 'I feel as if I was in a disagreeable dream, or had the nightmare.'

'Erminie,' he answered, laughing, 'I feel as if I had lost my footing in this age and country, and slipped down into the middle of the tenth century in Spain!'

'Hush!' whispered Erminie.

'What is it?'

'I heard some one talking! Listen!'

There was certainly a murmur proceeding from some dark room in their vicinity, and then an angry voice spoke aloud:

'Why the foul fiend, then didn't you take them into see the old woman?'

The muttering voice made some reply, to which the loud voice responded:

'Hush! what danger? that's all over now. The verdict of the coroner's inquest settled that. Suicide. Nothing more likely. After that there was nothing more to be said.'

A blaze of lightning that flashed through every chink and crevice of the shut up old house, and a crash of thunder that overwhelmed all other sounds, stopped the talk of the unseen companions.

Then the muttering voice was heard again saying something offensive to the interlocutor, though inaudible to the listeners, for the loud voice replied:

'Drinking! no, I have not been drinking! at least not more than is good for me! The moment any one takes a deep breath and shows a little fearlessness, you think they've been—drinking? Go and look after the people you have left in the hall so long, and take them up to see the old woman. That is, if she wants to see them. You must humour her; but as for the girl—'

Again the murmuring voice interposed, but the loud voice broke in:

'I tell you she must be got out of the way! Now go look after those visitors below.'

A sound of shuffling feet was heard. And Justin whispered to Erminie:

'Little sister, there's something wrong here, but we must not seem to have been listening.' And so saying, he hurried her down the stairs, as fast as the darkness would permit him to do with safety. Arrived at the foot, he waited some few minutes and then he sang out as loud as he could:

'Hallo! waiter! porter! footman! majordomo! man-of-all-work! whatever or who-

ever you are! where are you? Come, let us in; or let us out!'

'I am here, cat fire to you! Couldn't you be quiet for five minutes, while I was gone to tell the old lady?' answered a growling voice from the hall above. And at the same time a person, bearing a dim light, began to descend the stairs.

He was a man of about thirty years of age, of gigantic height; but with a small head, and closely-cut black hair, and a beardless, or else closely-shaven, dark-complexioned face; a man you would not like to meet on a lonely road on a dark night. He was dressed from head to foot in a closely-fitting suit of the dust-coloured coarse cloth that has since become so well known as the uniform of the Confederate army.

'Couldn't you be easy for five minutes, while I was gone?' he growled, as he reached the foot of the stairs.

'Your minutes are very long ones, friend,' laughed Justin.

'You want to see the old lady, you say?'

'I wish to see Miss Pole.'

'Come along, then,' said the man, stopping to snuff the candle with his fingers, and then leading the way up stairs.

Justin, still holding his sister under his arm, re-ascended the stairs.

By the light of the candle carried by the man before him, he saw that this part of the old house seemed entirely unfurnished. The floors were bare and rough, and broken here and there, and the walls were disfigured by torn paper and fallen plastering.

Arrived at the landing of the staircase, Justin noticed that many doors led into this hall; but they were all closely shut.

Up still another flight of stairs they went, and then all was changed.

The hall of the third storey was neatly papered and comfortably carpeted, and well lighted by a small, clear lamp hanging from the ceiling. A large window at the end of this hall was also curtained. Four doors opened from it, two on the right and two on the left; they were painted white and were very nice. Indeed everything on this floor seemed very neat and clean, well kept and comfortable—forming a marked contrast to the neglect, dirt, desolation and discomfort below.

The smooth-chinned giant in the dust-coloured clothes, opened the nearest door to the right, and said:

'Go in there.'

With Erminie tucked under one arm, and his hat in his hand, Justin entered the room.

It was a neatly furnished sitting-room, lighted like the hall, by a small, clear lamp, hanging from the ceiling.

Under this lamp stood a large, round centre-table, covered with flowered green cloth, and laden with books, book-marks, hand-screens, smelling-bottles, a small open work-box, and in short, all the paraphernalia of a lady's table.

Beside it, in a large resting-chair, with her feet upon a foot-cushion, reclined a very old lady, bent with age, and trembling with palsy. She was wrapped in a light-coloured French chintz dressing-gown, and her shaking head was covered with a fine lace cap, whose deep borders softly shaded her silver hair and withered face.

Seeing the visitors enter, she laid aside knitting-work she had held in her hands, and took up an ivory-headed cane that stood by her side, and so attempted to rise to receive them, but apparently her strength was not equal to the task, for after shaking violently, she dropped the cane and sank back in her chair.

Justin immediately stepped forward, and picked up the fallen cane, and with a reverential bow to the aged woman, set it in its place.

'You've come to see me?' inquired the old lady, in a shrill and quivering voice.

'Yes, madam; I hope to see you in your usual health,' said the young man, bending his head.

Miss Pole stretched out her trembling hand, and took up a small hand-bell from the table, and rang it feebly.

A door, leading from the adjoining room, opened, and an aged negro woman, almost as much bent, infirm, and withered as her mistress, entered.

'Nan, place chairs for this gentleman and this— Who is the lady?' said Miss Pole, suddenly turning to Justin.

'Miss Rosenthal, my sister,' answered the young man.

'Place chairs for Mr.—Mr. Rodenstall and his sister.'

The weird serving-woman did as she was bid, and then left the room.

'Now, then, my good sir, to business. I suppose you come from Trent, my agent?' said Miss Pole, when all were seated.

'No, madam; I—'

'Then what did you come for? I receive no visitors except upon business,' interrupted the old lady impatiently.

'Pardon me, madam. We are friends of your niece; and not having heard from her for some weeks, and being on the point of leaving the city for the season, we came here to inquire about her.'

'About—whom?' demanded Miss Pole,

in a shrill, impatient voice, as she began to tremble with excitement.

'Your niece, Miss Conyers.'

Shaking violently, the old lady moved her hand to the bell and rang it again.

The weird handmaid appeared.

'Nan, Nan, show these people down stairs, and tell Dole to see 'em out! and to mind how he sends unwelcome visitors to me again!' exclaimed the old lady, shaking more and more violently with growing excitement.

'I hope I have given you no cause for offence, madam,' said Justin, deprecatingly.

'Offence! oh—offence!' stammered the old lady, with her head nodding fast between palsy and anger. 'How dare you mention the name of Britomarte Conyers in my presence?—a toad! a beast! a snake!' And at every epithet she spat with spite. 'Show 'em out! show 'em out! show 'em out, Nan!'

'I am very sorry, madam, to hear you speak in this intemperate manner of your niece. I have the highest respect for Miss Conyers,' said Justin, gravely.

'You have? A monster! a serpent! a devil! Show 'em out! show 'em out! why don't you show 'em out, Nan!' cried the old virago, nodding her head, and stamping her feet, and rattling her cane with her shaking hands.

'You hurt yourself much more than you hurt Miss Conyers, by this injurious language; for her, indeed, it cannot affect,' said Justin, sternly.

'Go! go! go!' spattered the old creature, letting fall her cane, and seizing up a book, which, with all her trembling strength, she launched at the offender. But, of course, the missile fell wide of its mark.

Erminie, shocked, amazed and terrified, clung to the arm of her brother.

'I wish you a better spirit, Miss Pole,' said Justin; and bowing as courteously as if he were leaving the presence of a queen who had conferred upon him a grace, he passed out of the room, while the weird waiting-woman held open the door.

'Oh! what a house; oh! what people. Poor Britomarte!' gasped Erminie, hiding her face on her brother's bosom and bursting into tears.

'For heaven's sake, my child, try to be calm. We shall soon be out and on our way home,' whispered Justin, as they descended the stairs.

The giant with the small head and bare chin awaited them in the hall below.

'Had a pleasant visit, master, eh?' he asked, with an ugly grin.

'Open the door,' was the only answer Justin deigned to make.

'With pleasure, master,' said the man, in a sarcastic tone, as he unfastened the hall door and set it open.

Justin led his sobbing sister out, and the door clanged to behind them.

Erminie's spirits had been too severely tried, and she could not at once recover her equanimity.

The storm had subsided, and the remnants of the storm-clouds had separated overhead and were rolling down and massing themselves in heavy ranges of mountains around the horizon. The moon was climbing up through a ravine in the eastern range.

'Come! cheer up, my darling! A grim old house; a glum old hostess, and a grudging welcome. That is all that can be said about our adventure. It is something to laugh at now that it is over,' said Justin, as he led the unnerved girl through the broken gateway and into the narrow footpath through the woods.

'Oh, Justin, I shall not get over it in a month! I never will insist on going anywhere again,' said Erminie.

'Tuck up your dress, my dear. It is very wet here from the recent rain,' said Justin, as they carefully picked their way through the wood path that brought them at last to the broken fence dividing the woods from the old field.

Justin helped his sister over this obstruction, and they crossed the field to the old barn where the carriage awaited them.

They found the carriage in a well sheltered place under the old roof. The horses were standing as patiently as hack horses are wont to do. And the coachman, having taken shelter inside the carriage, was fast asleep.

Justin woke him up, and made him understand that he was not sleeping in his own bed in the loft over the livery stable, but in their hired hack in an old barn, and finally succeeded in getting him up into his seat and putting the reins into his hands.

Then Mr. Rosenthal put his sister into the carriage, took his seat by her side and gave the order to drive home.

The horses moved with a will; and so, after two hours of rapid travelling, they arrived safely at the parsonage.

CHAPTER V.

THE RAINBOW.

Come from the close town to the breezy sea—
The boundless sea that laveth many lands;
Where shells, unknown to cities, fair and free,
Lie brightly scattered on the gleaming sands;
There, 'mid the hush of slumbering Ocean's war,
We'll sit and watch the silver tissued waves
O'ep languidly along the silent shore,
And cool our heated feet with gentle laves.—*Mrs. Norton.*

'We will go by one of those coasting steamers that stop at all the landings, father, dear, so that we can show Colon l Eastworth all the beautiful scenery of capes and creeks along the shores of the Potomac and the Chesapeake; which we could not see in going by the fast boat, that keeps the middle of the channel in river and bay from Washington to Richmond,' said the Lutheran minister's daughter, as she joined the c rcle at the breakfast table, on the morning after her strange night adventure.

In truth, Erminie was pale, pensive and abstracted; and it was only by an effort of courtesy that she forced herself to take an interest in the subject of their jou ney.

'Oh, yes—exactly. I have settled all that. I know we are all to go to-morrow morning; but wha I want to ask is where you and your brother went yesterday afternoon, and where you came from so late last night?' said the minister, with mock solemnity, for, in fact, he had the greatest confidence in the prudence of his children.

But Erminie's soft brown eyes widened with dismay, as she turned them with an appealing glance to her brother.

Justin gravely took upon himself the office of respondent, and related the incidents of their visit to Witch Elms.

The minister gave a very serious attention to the narrative, and, at its close, said—

'I do not mind your exposure to the storm in the least; my children are not so delicately brought up as to take harm from a lit le rain and wind; but there is something wrong in that house!'

'Oh, father, dear, yes! there is—there must be! Think of her discarding Britomarte! There must be peop e about her who are undermining Britomarte in order to inherit the old lady's property,' eagerly exclaimed Erminie, jumping to the most common-place conclusion in the range of possibility.

'No, my dear; it is not that. I happen to know that the old lady has only a life interest in Witch Elms, which is absolutely settled on Miss Conyers beyond any one's power to deprive her of it; also that the old place is really worth next to nothing. What little land is left to the estate is thoroughly worn out. The house is ready to tumble about the ears of the dwellers within it; and the old lady has no income except from the sale of timber from her fast wasting woods, and fruits from her old trees. What ever else it may be that is wrong, it is not what you think,' said Dr. Rosenthal.

'But oh, father, dear—Britomarte! What will become of Britomarte, now that the old lady has discarded her?' said Erminie, unconsciously clasping her hands, and gazing piteously into her father's face.

'I understand that look, my dear. Miss Conyers shall be my care. She is much too independent, I judge, to accept a home—a permanent one, I mean—at my hands or at yours; but I will invite her here, and then find some situation for her as assistant teacher in a school, or a private governess in a family. Do not worry yourself about your friend, my dear child,' said Erminie's father, kindly.

'Thank you, for Britomarte, dear father! I knew you would care for her; but oh! how shall we find her?'

'You must trust in divine Providence, my dear. Remember that, if you and I were out of the question, there is the All-father to care for each one of his children.'

Justin had said nothing since finishing his story of the visit to Witch Elms; but as he listened to the talk of which Britomarte was the subject, his face was a study, from its perfect assurance. Next to his faith in Providence and in himself, was his faith in Bri omarte and her fortunes.

'What strikes me in this adventure of yours, Rosenthal, is that strange fragment of conversation you overheard,' put in Colonel Eastworth.

Justin turned an attentive face towards the speaker, and waited for him to explain himself.

'Let me see, what were the words exactly? Oh! something like these:

'"Bosh! What danger? That's all over now! The verdict of the coroner's inquest settled that. Suicide. Nothing more likely. After that nothing more to be said."'

'Now, you observe these words argue a "foregone conc'usion," as Shakespeare says. What conclusion? What has been done? Do you know of any mysterious death that

has taken place in this neighbourhood upon which any coroner's jury has sat and returned a verdict of suicide?' continued the visitor.

'None whatever in this region for some years. But in other cities scarcely a morning paper comes in that does not record one or more,' replied Justin; 'though certainly, as you say, those words you quoted argued a "foregone conclusion." But we can keep our senses about us, and our attention alert, without forming ourselves into a detective police force to ferret out offenders,' concluded Britomarte's lover, who did not wish that part of the subject pursued.

The family arose from breakfast, and went about their several preparations for the journey.

Very early the next morning a cheerful party entered the roomy carriage that had been engaged to take them to the steamboat, where they arrived in good time.

They had a beautiful voyage down the river by daylight, and down the bay by moonlight.

And when the passengers dressed and went on deck the next morning they found their boat anchored in the midst of a scene as lovely as ever painter drew or poet dreamed.

It was at the mouth of Crystal Creek, on the eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay.

Back from the water rose and fell the land, in rolling hills and vales, and verdant woods and yellow fields, until it reached the far-off horizon, where the sun was rising under a gorgeous canopy of crimson, golden, purple and roseate clouds.

And all this splendour of colouring—green, harvest-crowned hills, verdant woods, azure sky, and roseate clouds—was reflected in the clear breadth of the creek as in a mirror—making a picture rich in tints as any work of Claude Lorraine's.

It was this dazzling radiance of hues that gave the scene its name of the 'Rainbows.'

'I have never seen anything so beautiful out of Italy,' said Colonel Eastworth, with earnest admiration in every tone of his voice and glance of his eyes.

'Or even in Italy,' added Justin, emphatically. 'Our Southern scenery wants its poets and painters yet.'

Erminie was gazing rapt, silent, breathless, upon the heavenly beauty of the landscape.

Dr. Rosenthal was keeping watch upon the luggage that was being brought up on the deck.

While the little group stood looking on the landscape with admiration and delight, they saw a boat rowed by six men, and bearing a little pennon with the word 'Welcome' in silver letters on a white ground, coming down the creek.

'It is Goldsborough's boat that he has sent to bring us off,' said Dr. Rosenthal, as the little skiff, skimming the water, approached them.

In another moment it was alongside, and Albert Goldsborough, dressed in a boatman's broad hat and blue jacket, sprang upon the deck.

'Good morning, Miss Rosenthal! How do you do, Doctor? Very glad to see you, Colonel! Justin, old fellow, I'm delighted! But we expected you last evening!' exclaimed the young man, shaking hands all around.

'And we should have arrived last evening, but that this young lady preferred to come by the way boat, for the sake of running up all the creeks, both sides of the water, and showing our friend here our coast scenery, as she calls it,' replied Dr. Rosenthal.

'And I cannot but feel myself under great obligations to Miss Rosenthal,' added Colonel Eastworth, with a glance full of meaning towards the minister's daughter that brought the crimson in rich waves over her cheek.

'Oh! if you came by the way boat for that reason, it is all right, to be sure! I hardly know anything more monotonous than a run down the river and the bay in a large steamer that keeps to the middle of the channel all the way; or more varied and beautiful than a voyage in one of these little accommodating coasters, that run right and left up all the little creeks,' agreed Albert.

'All well up at the house?' inquired Justin.

'Splendid!'

'But how was it that you got the boat here so promptly?' questioned the doctor.

'Prescience! As you didn't get here by the Leviathan last night, I judged that you would arrive by the Minnow some time today. I say "some time," because there really is no irregularity about these little coasters. The time they take for a voyage depends upon the number of times they have to answer signals from the shore and stop to land or take in passengers; so I set Jehoshaphat to watch and listen for the steamer's whistle. He heard it and signalled me; and we are here.'

While they talked, the sailors had been lifting down the trunks, band-boxes and portmanteaus from the deck of the steamer to the little boat. And now, as all was ready, Albert stepped forward with the intention of assisting Erminie to descend into

the skiff; but he was dexterously forestalled by Colonel Eastworth, who swiftly and softly set her down on the cushioned seat in the stern of the boat.

All the rest of the party followed. The men took their oars, and the skiff glided away from the steamer amid a flourish of gloved caps and a round of cheers from the seamen.

And while the steamer puffed away on her longer voyage, the boat glided up the creek to a little boat house that stood among the trees like a miniature Grecian temple in some Arcadian grove.

Here they landed at some stone steps, and went up through the temple that also formed the entrance to an avenue shaded on each side by acacia trees, and leading up to the house.

It was a white, two-storied mansion, with a vine-shaded and rose-wreathed porch running all around it.

Another beautiful picture was now presented. On these porches, seen by glimpses through the green foliage and blooming flowers, were the white-robed beauties of the house, come out to wait for and welcome the new visitors.

'You are just in time for our early breakfast, which is waiting for you! The fishing has been very successful to-day. Doctor you have arrived at the age of wisdom when a man appreciates the good things of this life, and you will be glad to hear that the "sheep's head" and the soft-shell crabs were never so fine as at the present season,' said Albert Goldsborough, as he led the way up to the house.

Alberta flew out, a fluttering white dove, to clasp Erminie to her bosom; and then to recollect herself and receive Dr. Rosenthal and the gentlemen of his party with cool but courteous hospitality.

Within the hall door the master and mistress of the house received their guests, and sent servants to attend them to their several rooms.

Alberta of course accompanied Erminie to her chamber, where the minister's daughter laid off her bonnet and mantle, and exchanged her travelling habit for a morning dress.

One minute Erminie lingered near the front windows of her chamber, to look out upon the varied landscape, the rolling hills and valleys, the verdant fields and forests, the winding creek and the broad sea, all beaming in the splendour of the morning sun, and then she turned to follow her friend down to the breakfast-room.

A pleasant room! with many windows opening to the sea on one side and to the woods on the other. A tempting table covered with all the delicacies of the season and forest shade, the orchards and the dairies. And a choice company! gathered to enjoy, to the utmost, blessings within their reach.

At the breakfast-table the programme of pleasure for the day was discussed, and a fishing party was arranged, in which ladies and gentlemen were all to join. And after the morning meal was over, the guests separated to prepare for the excursion.

It was while the ladies were all ready and waiting in the front porch for their gentlemen escorts that Erminie inquired of Alberta whether their schoolmate, Elfrida Fielding, was coming to the Rainbows.

'She has written to say that she will be here in a day or two. So also has Britomarte Conyers,' answered Miss Goldsborough.

'Britomarte Conyers! Oh, is she really coming? When did you hear from her? Where is she? How is she? What day will she be here?' eagerly inquired Erminie, hurrying question upon question, in a manner that must have bewildered any one less self-possessed than Alberta Goldsborough.

'She wrote on Monday last, from New York, to say that she had decided to accept the invitation I gave her when we parted, and that she would be with us on or before Saturday evening,' answered the young lady calmly and clearly.

'And she is well? She is happy? She is all right?' breathlessly questioned Erminie.

'It is to be presumed so,' answered Alberta, elevating her light eyebrows in cool surprise.

The gentlemen now came out, accoutred with their fishing paraphernalia.

Erminie hastened to her brother, and slipped her hand over his arm and whispered hurriedly:

'Oh, Justin! Britomarte has been heard from. She has written to Alberta to say that she is coming here.'

'I am very glad to hear it. When?' inquired Justin, with an earnestness of interest that he did not attempt to disguise.

'On or before Saturday evening.'

'And is that all?'

'Yes; that is all I know. Alberta told me.'

They were now walking down the avenue, in a procession formed of all the fishing party towards the boat-house, where all the boats were in readiness for their raid upon the bay.

They reached the boat-house, and were in the act of getting into the boats when

their ears were startled by a voice calling out:

'Stop! hold on! Where are you all going? Wait for me!'

Looking in the direction whence the voice came, there they saw Elfrida Fielding, mounted on a little black horse, and galloping towards them from down the forest road.

Of course there was a halt in the company as the young sprite dashed up to the spot, and sprang from her saddle before any of the gentlemen of the party could get out of the boats to assist her.

'Wait for me! I can tuck up my skirt and get in the boat just as I am. One of the servants can take my horse to the stable. And some of the gentlemen can lend me a spare fishing——Oh! how do you do, Mr. Albert?—Thank you!'

All this was rattled out by the wild girl, as she quickly pinned up her riding skirt and ran down to the boats, and gave her hand to young Mr. Goldsborough, who had stepped forward to meet her and help her into his own especial skiff.

'How do you do, Alberta? I would come and pay my respects to you, only you are too far off!' said Elfrida calling out to Miss Goldsborough, who was in a distant boat, commanded by the young Italian professor, who was one of the guests of the house.

'I am very glad to see you Elfrida; but surely you did not come unattended,' said Alberta, who was in truth somewhat shocked by the unceremonious onset of her friend.

'And what if I did? No one was going to eat me on the road. But I didn't. Pap's behind there, somewhere. I outrode him as soon as I saw the boats. He will be along presently, and make himself comfortable up at the house with your governor. We could have been here last night only it was so late when we got to the "Sportsman's Repose," as the horrid old house is called where pap stopped to water the horses; that he thought he would put up there all night and not disturb you at unreasonable hours. Ah! how do you do, Erminie? When did you get here?' said the witch, suddenly catching sight of the minister's daughter, who was seated in the farthest boat, with her brother, and Colonel Eastworth.

Erminie bowed and smiled her greeting, but did not dare to trust her voice to the high key required to answer Elfrida from that distance.

And so the boats put off from Crystal Creek for a certain 'Silver Shore,' where blue fish, sheep's head and other salt water game most did congregate.

A fine day, a merry party, a successful fishing, and a delicious luncheon! What else was wanted to complete the enjoyment of the party?

Sparkling little black-eyed Elfrida bewitched the tall, fair-haired brother of Miss Goldsborough.

But Alberta was not jealous; that beautiful, blue-eyed blonde was only too well pleased to be left to listen in peace to that handsome, dark Italian troubadour, who had rowed her boat into a clear and shady nook, where, instead of troubling the fish, he rested at the feet of the beauty and sang to the accompaniment of his guitar one of the sweetest love-songs of his musical native land.

CHAPTER VI.

BRITOMARTE'S FATE.

Head not though at times she seem
Dark and still, and cold as clay;
She is shadowed by her dream,
But 'twill pass away.
—*Barry Cornwall.*

You love her, yearn to tell her, yet have
No one great heart word to tell her all.
—*Browning.*

It was nearly sunset when the fishing party turned the boats in the direction of home, and they entered the mouth of Crystal Creek just as the level rays of the sinking sun lighted up all the land and water in the rainbow hues that gave the place its name.

They debarked at the boat-house, leaving the fish and the fishing-tackle in the boats, to be cared for by Justus, while they went on, a merry, straggling party, up the avenue towards the house.

As they drew near, their merriment was suddenly hushed.

On the porch was seated a solitary figure clothed in deep mourning.

While all were looking to see who the stranger was, Erminie, with a suppressed cry, recognized Britomarte, and sprang up the stairs to greet her.

Alberta quickly followed to welcome her new guest.

'Oh, Britomarte! I am so glad! so glad to see you, dearest! How—' began Erminie, gaily; then, suddenly becoming aware of her friend's black dress and grave face, she moderated her excitement, and murmured, as she embraced Miss Conyers, 'Oh, Britomarte, darling, you have lost some one. I am so sorry for you!'

'Hush; yes, I have lost some one. Take no notice.—How do you do, Alberta?—I am better than my promise, you perceive. I am here before my time. Do I come too soon?' said Britomarte, who, after returning the embrace of Erminie, had looked up to receive the welcome of Miss Goldsborough.

'Certainly not; you could not come too soon. I am now quite contented, for you complete our party,' replied the heiress, with as much cordiality as was consistent with her cool, well-governed nature. 'But you have lost a friend,' added Miss Goldsborough, gravely.

'Yes, I have lost a friend— Ah! how do you do, Elfrida? I am very glad to meet you again,' said Miss Conyers, breaking off abruptly from answering Alberta to shake hands with Elfrida, who had unceremoniously seized her.

'Oh, dear Britty, who's dead? Nobody very near to you, I hope?' exclaimed the thoughtless girl, in a low, hurried voice.

'The nearest I had in the world! But do not speak of this. I am wearing black; but I did not come among you to be a damper,' said Miss Conyers in a low, calm, firm voice, that silenced the giddy girl.

The other members of the fishing party now came up. Those who had had a previous acquaintance with Miss Conyers, seeing her mourning dress, welcomed her with grave courtesy. Those who had to be introduced to her bowed with seriousness approaching solemnity.

And all presently dispersed to get ready for dinner.

Alberta accompanied Britomarte and Erminie to the spacious chamber looking out upon the sea, and which had been appropriated to the use of the minister's daughter.

'The crowded state of the house obliges me to put you two in a room together,' explained Miss Goldsborough, as they entered.

'You could not do me a greater kindness,' said Erminie, who, as the first occupant of the room, felt a propriety in making the new-comer welcome, and who, as Britomarte's most loving friend, could do so with cordial sincerity.

'And I am very well pleased to be with my darling,' said Miss Conyers.

'I thought you both would be pleased,' graciously smiled Miss Goldsborough, as she left the friends to themselves.

'Dear Britomarte!' said Erminie, throwing her arms around Miss Conyers, 'I feel so distressed for you! all that touches you touches me! Tell me all about it, Britomarte.'

'Darling, I have lost some one; I have suffered; but my heart is not broken, else I should not be here. That is all that I can tell you, for there is good reason why I cannot tell you more. I hate mystery, my pet; but this mystery—and I acknowledge that it is one—is none of mine. Ask me no more.'

And pressing a kiss upon her favourite's forehead, Miss Conyers turned away.

Erminie, with a sigh, began to change her gray woollen fishing dress for a light-coloured organdy robe suitable for the evening.

Britomarte also changed her black alpaca travelling habit for a grenadine dress, and when both were ready they went down to dinner.

At the foot of the stairs they met Dr. Rosenthal and Justin waiting for Erminie.

Neither of these gentlemen had heard of Britomarte's arrival. The doctor had been in the stables with Mr. Goldsborough and Mr. Fielding. And Justin had lingered at the boathouse to see to the safe bestowal of the boats.

Now Erminie could not but notice the involuntary start forward and sudden lighting up of countenance with which Justin recognised Britomarte; and at the same time she felt the heart of the man-hater throb faster and harder against her own arm that rested near it.

'These two love each other in spite of all,' was the mental comment of the minister's daughter, as she saw the meeting, and took the arm of her father, thus leaving Britomarte to Justin.

As for the two gentlemen of the group, the old minister warmly shook hands with Miss Conyers, and cordially welcomed her as an addition to their party.

Justin bowed gravely and offered her his arm. And so they passed into the drawing-room to await the announcement of dinner.

Meanwhile Alberta Goldsborough, on leaving her friends, made a careful evening toilet, and then joined her lady mother in Mrs. Goldsborough's own room, with the view of satisfying her curiosity respecting Miss Conyers.

'Mamma,' she inquired, 'do you know who Britomarte is in mourning for?'

'My dear,' replied the lady, hesitatingly, 'I think I do.'

'Who is it then, mamma?'

'The nearest and dearest she had in the world.'

'But that is not telling me who it is, mamma.'

'My child, I would rather not pursue the subject. It is scarcely one fit for your discussion. This, however, I will tell you,

that I consider the less a good thing for Miss Conyers.'

'Mamma, with this strange story hanging around Britomarte, do you think it was quite the thing to invite her here? If the other visitors should discover—'

'Miss Goldsborough,' said the lady, holding up her finger in a warning manner, 'stop just where you are. Any person whom your fa her and myself agree to invite to our house is unquestionably a proper associate for any of our visitors. How much or how little of this "strange story," as you call it, may have reached your ears, I do not know. Little enough, I hope is your knowledge of it. But let us hear no more about it, Alberta,' concluded Mrs. Goldsborough, in a gentler tone.

And they went down to the drawing room together.

As the guests were now all assembled, dinner was announced.

The lady of the house, as a mark of grace, took the arm of Dr. Rosenthal and led the way to the table, unconscious that Miss Goldsborough followed her, conducted by the handsome, ineligible Italian professor; or that Albert Goldsborough led the little witch Elfrida Fielding. Erminie was escorted by Colonel Eastworth, and Britomarte by Justin Rosenthal, who had not left her side since he had met her at the foot of the stairs.

The other guests with whom we have nothing to do, followed as they pleased.

But to all who were not too much absorbed in their own affairs to notice those of others, this procession to the dinner table was very significant of the 'elective affinities' between certain of the young people.

I am not going to describe in detail the life at this water side country-house, although it was a life well worth living in the summer holiday months. I shall glance at a few of its recreations. There were riding and driving, sailing and fishing parties; picnics in the woods, and oyster feasts on the beach, during the day. And there were music and dancing and card-parties in the evenings.

Britomarte, in mourning though she was, became no killjoy to the house. Indeed, notwithstanding her black dress and pensive face, it was observed by those who knew her best, that she now looked freer and easier and happier than she had ever done before. It seemed as though something had happened which, while it touched her heart with a tender sorrow, relieved her life from a great terror.

She was not the slightest hindrance to the festivities of the company; she joined in all the quiet recreations and only avoided the noisy galeties.

Meantime, however, there was a great deal of gossip about Miss Conyers, whom she and her host and hostess were about; for of course in a large country-house, where there was any thing unexplained about any member of the company, there was sure to be gossip; and equally of course it would only be indulged in the absence of the object of it and of her entertainers. Certainly, like all other gossip, it was seldom founded upon fact; but the superstructure bore a very unfair proportion of the foundation.

They—the gossipers—said that Miss Conyer's aunt had discarded her, which was perfectly true; but they added that it was for some grave fault, which was utterly false.

They observed that Mr. Rosenthal was devoted to Miss Conyers, and they were right; but they remarked that she was doing all that she could to catch him, in which they were wrong.

They noted that she had but two dresses—a coarse alpaca that she wore in the morning, and a grenadine for evening, and they divined that her means were very small and rapidly growing smaller without any prospect of increase, and in this they were indeed therefore that her visit to the Rainbows was a mere act of sponging upon the hospitality of the Goldsboroughs, and in this they were widely mistaken.

They said confidently that she was staying at the Rainbows until she should be able to turn herself around, and they wondered what she would do next.

A rumor got afloat that some inexplicable reproach attaching to her must prevent her success in either obtaining a situation as teacher or a proposal of marriage, and they wondered whatever would become of the poor girl.

Some of these uncomplimentary conjectures were made in the presence of Erminie, who first confined herself to modest praises of her absent friend, but when these praises were met by sarcasms and insinuations levelled at Miss Conyers, the minister's daughter, though the gentlest of all gentle creatures, proved that she could become a lion-hearted lamb in the defence of one she loved.

After one of those single-handed encounters with the whole host of Britomarte's traducers, Erminie, rushing from their presence with her eyes full of indignant tears, ran up against her brother.

'What has vexed you, my darling?' was the surprised question.

'Give me your arm down the avenue and I will tell you,' gasped Erminie.

And Justin drew her hand within his arm and led her where she wished to go.

And when they were at a safe distance from the house, Erminie told her brother all that the ladies had been saying of Britomarte.

Justin pressed his sister to his heart saying tenderly:

'If it were possible for me to love you more than I do now, darling, it would be for your loyalty to your friend. Be at ease, sweet sister. This shall be set right. My prospects justify me in thinking of marriage. And with my dear father's full approval, I am about to ask Miss Conyers to be my wife.'

CHAPTER VII.

WOMAN'S LOVE AND WOMAN'S RIGHTS.

For she is young and led astray
This Britomarte, and schemes, men say,
To change the laws of church and state,
So thine shall be an angel's fate,
Who'er the thunder breaks shall roll
The cloud away and save her soul.

—*Browning.*

Miss Conyers was certainly the most brilliant woman in the circle of beauties gathered together at the Rainbows. Nothing but her poverty, obscurity, and the mystery underlying her life, prevented her from being the belle of the seaside villa. But poor, obscure, and even questionable as was her social position, she excited the admiration of the men, the jealousy of the women, and the interest of all.

There were fairer women, with more regular features and brighter bloom than she possessed, and they had all the aid of French laboratories and fashionable bazaars to enhance their beauty; but not one of them owned a face so lovely, attractive and fascinating as hers; it was beautiful even in repose; but when thought or feeling lighted and warmed her countenance, it was irresistible.

There were fine singers there, who had been trained by celebrated masters, but not one whose voice was so rich, full, clear and powerful, and so wide and free of compass, and so full of passion and expression, as hers. A wonderful voice! It was as Justin said to the doctor, 'as deep as hell and as high as heaven, with the feeling of both in it's tones.'

But her most marvellous power was in her readings—her dramatic readings. There is scarcely one good reader in a million, even among professors of the art; I have heard but two who equalled Britomarte—one was the renowned Rachel, and the other still lives, and must therefore be nameless here. Being possessed of this accomplishment, Britomarte was often called upon to exercise it for the amusement of her companions.

We all like to do what we know we can do best, and Miss Conyers was always at the service of the company with her 'Readings from the Poets.' She read without embarrassment, even when knowing herself to be before carping, captious, envious critics, who were keenly on the watch to find fault. She read freely, because she left herself and entered, mind, soul and spirit, into the thought, passion, or pathos of her subject. The tones of her voice, the expression of her countenance, changed naturally with the changing emotion of her theme. And yet, indeed, it was not all nature, but nature refined by cultivation to the highest art.

Of all Britomarte's gifts, this was the one which most excited the admiration of her friends and the envy of her foes.

'She reads well, too well for a young lady,' said one of the maidenhood of her detractors, as the guests were assembled on the front porch one morning after she had given them an 'Evening with the Poets.'

'Too well! She reads as no decent young woman ever could! Only think of her reading Browning's Count Gismond straight through word for word? I declare I didn't know where to put my head,' said Mrs. Allan, who was of the party.

'I did not notice anything wrong in Count Gismond,' said little Miss Bond; 'but it is quite dreadful the way her face changes! Why, when she was reading Guy Mannering for us last night, when she came to the part of Meg Merriles, I declare her face drew down and sunk in and darkened till she looked ninety years old, and then, all in a moment when she came to Lucy Bertram, her face shortened up and bloomed out until it was as young and tender as—as—Erminie's! And all that without any change of dress, or paint or powder, or anything but—but—'

'The soul,' said Erminie, helping the critic to an idea.

'Yes! really! It was just as if her soul had suddenly cast off the form of the old woman, and taken that of a young girl.'

'And then in her ballad readings how wonderful she is! In reading Monk Lewis' Maniac she is terrible! And in Browning's Confessional she is more than terrible—she is awful! she overcomes me!' said Britomarte's admirer.

'Of all her repertoire, I like best her reading of Macaulay's Battle of Ivry. There never was so grand a battle piece written,

to begin with! And in her reading of that I admire her most, for in that she is by turns solemn, pathetic, terrible, and always glorious! Do you remember how she gives this stanza:

'Now, by the lips of those ye love, fair gentlemen of France!
Charge! for the golden lilies now! upon them with the lance!'
A thousand spurs are striking deep, a thousand spears in rest,
A thousand knights are pressing close behind the snow white crest,
And in they burst! and on they rushed! while, like a guiding star,
Amid the thickest carnage blazed the helmet of Navarre!'

'Heavens!' continued Erminie, with unusual enthusiasm for her tender nature, 'when Britomarte reads that poem, I see, hear and feel the whole battle scene! She, I know, is utterly lost to time, place, and circumstances present! She is no longer in the middle of the nineteenth century, in the drawing-room of a sea-side villa, reading to a company of carping critics. No! She is in the midst of the sixteenth century, on the battle field of Ivry, with the young Navarre leading his knights to victory! Oh! I often think Britomarte might be the Joan of Arc in some future heroic war!' exclaimed Miss Rosenthal, earnestly.

'Young ladies,' said Mrs. Dornton, a very dignified person of their party, 'I am quite shocked to hear you go on as you do. The effect these readings have upon your imaginations prove to my mind their great impropriety. Certainly the young woman reads with effect—with too much effect; and in every instance seems to fancy herself the hero or heroine of the play or poem, and transforms herself with great ease to the prisoner of the inquisition, the victim of the private mad-house, the hero of Ivry, the gipsy hag, or the Highland maiden. But what is this after all but the art of the actress? And what is she fit for but the stage!'

'Be careful, if you please, Mrs. Dornton!' said Erminie, warmly. 'Miss Conyers is at present my most esteemed friend, and may soon become, I hope and trust, my nearest female relative. Wonderfully endowed she is, indeed, to illustrate dramatic art, were drama ic art what it should be; but since it is not so, the idea you venture to advance is inadmissable in regard to her. And in future, Mrs. Dornton, I must request you to speak with more respect when you name Miss Conyers,' pursued the little lion-hearted lamb.

'Hoity-toity! Is Miss Conyers about to become your step-mother, to be sure? Well, she is just the sort of a girl to run away with the wits of an old gentleman!' laughed the lady.

'Or of a young one either, madam! It is patent to all that Miss Conyers is the most admired woman of our party. But she is not going to be my step-mother. She is too wise to wed a man of thrice her own age; nor has my father any thought of putting even the most esteemed woman in my dear mother's vacant place,' said Erminie, with gentle dignity.

'Perhaps then it is your handsome brother upon whom this nonpareil will bestow her hand,' sneered the widow.

'If so, my brother could not be more highly honoured, I am sure. Good morning, Mrs. Dornton,' said Erminie, curtseying with a delicate irony as she left the lady's presence.

'Pert little minx!' muttered the rebuked detractor to herself, as she turned to declaim against Britomarte to some other hearer.

I have spoken of this wonderful dramatic power of Britomarte; this protean power of taking any shape; this magic power of changing her voice and her face; this awful power of merging her own identity in that of another being—because it exercised a mighty influence upon her destiny, not however, in the way Mrs. Dornton prevised. Britomarte had never seen the inside of a theatre in all her life; she was in truth conscientiously opposed to the stage; and the most unlikely of all women to be attracted by anything her conscience disapproved.

Only, my reader, when you meet Britomarte in strange scenes and strange shapes, you will please remember this protean power of hers and you will not be incredulous.

Justin Rosenthal loved Britomarte Conyers, with a depth and earnestness of affection, and a singleness and persistance of purpose, very rarely experienced in this world of many distracting attractions and conflicting interests.

To win her as his wife was just now the first object of his existence, an object which he determined to accomplish before he should undertake any other enterprise—so as to get the affair off his mind, he said, and also that they two might commence the work of the world together as man and woman should.

And Britomarte? Well, it would have been almost impossible for any other woman, and it was difficult even for her, to conceal from the deeply interested, keenly searching eyes of her lover the true state of her affections. Britomarte loved Justin; but she combatted that love with all the strength of

her strong will. Within her bosom there was going on a fight fiercer than that fabled one between Christian and Apollyon. The battle was a silent one, confined to her own bosom; an invisible one, concealed, she hoped, from all eyes. It was indeed concealed from all but one pair of deeply reading eyes. And she who was a mystery to all others was very transparent to her lover. He watched the war waging between her intellect and her affections; between the principles of woman's rights and the pleadings of woman's love. He knew that he must sooner or later enter into this combat and take sides with love, who then of course must be the victor. But he could be a patient as well as a persistent lover. He never relented in his resolution to conquer the beautiful manhater; he never relaxed in his devotion to her, whether she received his attentions courteously or met them churlishly. He waited the proper time for making known his wishes towards her. That time was now drawing near.

The summer was fading into autumn; the season was waning to its close; the guests at the Rainbows were preparing to leave—many being anxious to get back to town to be present at the milliners' great openings and examine the new styles in fall bonnets.

In truth, Mr. and Mrs. Goldsborough were not very sorry to see their party breaking up. It had not indeed afforded them that full measure of satisfaction which their princely hospitality deserved. Two circumstances especially announced them. The growing friendship between their sole heiress the fair Alberta, and the Signor Vittorio, the penniless young Italian, on the one hand; and the manifest attachment between their nephew Albert and Farmer Fielding's pretty daughter.

And very much relieved they were when the sensitive young Italian,—who was neither adventurer nor fortune-hunter, nor willing to be considered such,—feeling the social atmosphere near the presence of his entertainers rather chilly, took the hint that his welcome was worn out and bowed his adieux; and also when Farmer Fielding placed his little girl on her pony and carried her off to Sunnyslopes.

Elfrida had entreated Britomarte to go with her to her mountain home, urging that the country was ever most beautiful in the autumn when all the woods were clothed in colours more gorgeous than the robes of Solomon in all his glory.

Miss Conyers had declined the visit with thanks and with the explanation that her plans for the autumn were fixed.

So Elfrida with a sigh left her friend.

But what of Britomarte? Where could she go from this temporary home? Not certainly to Witch Elms, since there the doors were fast closed against her entrance. Where then could she go? What means had she to go anywhere? What then were the plans of which she spoke? and how could she carry them out? Who could tell? Not even her lover!

Justin knew well enough what his own plans were, and how he should carry them out.

Three days before the day appointed for his own party to leave the Rainbows, Justin sought a private interview with Britomarte. He knew where to find her; for by this time he was well acquainted with all favourite haunts. It was late in the afternoon, and he was sure she would be found on 'Lord's Rock,' a point of land between Cyrstal Creek Creek and Bennet's bay, extending out into the Chesapeake—a solitary desert though so near the peopled villa, and only frequented by the lonely girl.

So down a narrow path, leading through the thick woods that lay below the house, he wandered till he came out upon the bluff overhanging the beach. Along the bushy bluff, now burnished bright in the late sunshine of the waning summer and the fading day, he went towards the tip of that long point extending like a giant's arm out to the sea.

As he approached he saw that she was sitting on the rock with her hands clasped upon her knees, her face turned seaward, and her black dress very conspicuous upon the glistening white stone at the extremity of the point.

So absorbed was she in thought that she remained totally unconscious of Justin's proximity until he picked up her bonnet, which had fallen to the ground, and handed it to her, saying—

'Excuse me, Miss Conyers; but the tide is creeping in, and if left there it will get wet; and even you, if you remain here much longer, may be cut off from return, for you must be aware that at high water this point of land is covered by the sea, with the exception of this rock, which, for the time, becomes an island.'

'Thank you, Mr. Rosenthal. I know that; but there is an hour of grace left. Pray, did you come here to remind me that twice a day Lord's Rock becomes an isolated fastness?' said Miss Conyers, raising her large, brilliant, dark gray orbs to his face.

And no one who saw the calmness of her well-controlled countenance, or heard the

steadiness of her measured tones, could have surmised the tumultuous rebellion of emotions excited in her bosom by the sudden intrusion of Justin upon her privacy—that is, no one but her lover himself, who saw beneath the calm exterior the struggle rise anew between her mind and heart.

'Was it for that you took the trouble to walk all the way here from the villa?' she repeated, ironically.

'No, Miss Conyers; it was for something more serious—more important—more imminent, indeed, than that,' said Justin, gravely, seating himself beside her. 'It would be bad,' he continued, 'if the rising tide, before you should become aware of it, should cover the point and cut you off from the land, and leave you alone upon this rock for twelve hours of darkness; but the evil would be temporary. You are brave enough to live over it, and the night would end in morning, and your road lie open for your return. But Britomarte! dear Britomarte!—there is an isolation more to be dreaded for you, because more fraught with fatal consequences than that I have named could be,' said Justin, trying to regulate the deep emotions of that passion, which was thrilling in every inflection of his earnest voice. 'Oh, Britomarte—'

'Hush! do hush, and go away!' she exclaimed, hastily interrupting him.

'No, no—I must speak! I have been silent long enough! Dear Britomarte, you must hear me now! You cannot have mistaken the meaning of my devotion to you in all the months we have passed together here. You—'

'Nor could you have failed to perceive that such devotion was very unacceptable to me. I thank you, of course. It was very complimentary to me, no doubt, and I—was very much honoured, indeed. But, as I said before, it was unacceptable, and you must have perceived that it was so.'

'But I did not,' said Justin, with a slight smile.

'A man of delicate perceptions would have done so. I did all I could to enlighten you.'

'I saw a mighty struggle going on in your bosom. I saw— But, ah! dearest, I will not tell you now what I saw. I did not come to do that. I came to tell you, Britomarte, how long and how entirely I have loved you—'

His voice trembled and broke.

'Stay,' she said; 'say no more. I can not listen to this. I have honestly endeavoured to save you from the humiliation that men feel, or fancy, when they have made such a mistake as you just have—'

'Britomarte,' he cried, in a quivering voice, 'I have made no mistake in my own feelings. I love you more than life.'

'But you have, it seems, in mine.'

'No, nor is yours. I affirm it,' he said earnestly, and a little proudly.

'Mr. Rosenthal, I cannot listen to this. If you are a gentleman, you will not press this matter!' exclaimed Britomarte. She, too, was deeply, strongly moved, and exerting all the strength of her strong will to control or to conceal her emotion. 'If you are a gentleman, you will leave me,' she repeated.

'As I am a man, I must stay and win a hearing from the woman I love more than words can tell.'

'Then, if you persist in staying, I must go,' said Britomarte, rising.

'No, no, Britomarte! I beseech you, no. Do not stir. Stay. Hear me—only hear me—it is not much to ask. Only hear me, and then reject me if you can,' he pleaded, even more earnestly with his steadfast eyes and hands than with his words.

She understood a sort of defiance in his words—'and then reject me if you can,' and that restored her self-control. Re-seating herself calmly, she said—

'"The woman who hesitates is lost," 'tis written. Perhaps you are thinking of that; perhaps you believe it. We shall see? Go on, Mr. Rosenthal, I will hear all you have to say; but I warn you that no words of yours can affect my feelings, or my principles, or my resolution.'

Underneath all this exterior serenity what emotion there was! It vibrated along the tones of her sweet voice, and quivered over the surface of her eloquent face.

Justin raised her hand, and pressed it to his lips, before she could prevent him; re-seated himself by her side; paused a moment; and then, in a voice thrilled with the strong passion of his heart, he said—

'Britomarte, I love you. Oh, that I could make you feel the real meaning of the phrase when uttered by truthful lips! All of life, or death—all of heaven or hell—seem to hang upon the words, I love you! Britomarte, from the first moment that I saw you, something in your face powerfully attracted me. It was not your beauty, dearest, though you are beautiful; it was something deeper than that. It was the soul looking from the face. I persuaded my sister to present me to you, and when she had done so, and left us together, a nearer view and closer acquaintance deepened the interest that your face alone had first awakened. I was spell-bound to your side.

You may remember that I left you no more during the whole evening.'

'Yes; I was but a school-girl, ignorant of the impropriety of monopolising a gentleman's attention for so long a time. A gentleman should have known better; but I believe the order is extinct,' answered Miss Conyers, doing all she could to steel her heart.

'That is severe, but I hope not true—certainly not true so long as my father lives,' said Justin, with the slightest possible approach to a smile.

'No; while Dr. Rosenthal exists, one gentleman assuredly lives,' admitted Britomarte, compunctiously.

'That being conceded, I will go on,' said Justin, lightly; but it was with a lightness only assumed; for as he resumed the subject nearest his heart, his voice again became agitated by suppressed passion. 'There was not the slightest shadow of an impropriety in my monopolising you for the whole evening, the act was mine, and not yours, fairest lady; nor do I feel the least twinge of conscience in the recollection of that delightful monopoly. Even on that evening, Britomarte, I already knew that I had then met the woman whom I should love exclusively, devotedly, as long as my life should last. Since that evening I have seen you frequently, and known you intimately; and the love born on that first evening has been fostered and strengthened, as even then I foresaw it would be, by all that I have seen or known of you since then.'

'It is a pity that all this should be wasted on a woman who can never return it,' said Miss Conyers, in a voice trembling with what might have seemed anger, but which Justin really knew to be the struggles of her own repressed but still responding feelings.

'It will not be so wasted,' answered Rosenthal, calmly. 'Ah, Britomarte! I love you not as men love in these latter days, when the passion for money, fame, place, power, glory, smothers and overwhelms the grand primeval passion that lies at the foundation of all life. I love you not as men love who, if they are disappointed in one woman this year, easily console themselves with another next year. I love you as men loved in those heroic days, when for woman's smile, solemn vows were made, mighty missions undertaken, great works accomplished ad deadly perils braved. I love you with my whole heart and soul, once and forever! And if it were possible that I should lose you, Britomarte, I should never love again! And now, lady, I have unveiled my heart before you. Now tell me, dearest, dearest,—what I can do to deserve—' his voice faltered for a single instant, and she took swift advantage of the pause to answer hastily and even harshly:

'You can do nothing! I never can accept your suit! Pray, to begin with, are you aware that I am a girl of very obscure birth!'

'That is nothing to me, beloved——'

'That I have not a penny——'

'I have more than enough for both, Britomarte!'

'And worse than all, that the shadow of a great shame is thought to rest upon my life!'

'How should that affect your personal merit, or my appreciation of it? Britomarte! Britomarte!' he broke forth passionately, 'I know that you are a noble woman, that falsehood has never sullied your lips, nor any mean thought tarnished the brightness of your brow, nor any just reproach bowed your head! This being so, let the substance of that shadow be what it may, it can make no difference in my sentiments towards you! I love you! I earnestly wish to make you my wife!'

'And you a clergyman and the son of a clergyman!'

'So much the more reason I should be true as truth and just as justice!—Britomarte! Britomarte! beloved! hear me! every shadow on your history, every sorrow on your heart, every trial in your path, does but deepen my love, and strength my faith, and increase my desire to gather you to my bosom and shelter you from all trouble, and save you from all danger! Come, darling, come.' And he held out his arm and pleaded with his eyes.

She was indeed terribly shaken by the fierce struggle in her bosom between woman's rights and woman's love. She heard his pleading tones, but dared not look at him. For a moment victory hung suspended.

'Come, darling, come! I never can be less than your lover, let me be more! accept me for your husband!'

'For my master, you mean, that is what "husband" signifies in your laws,' said the man-hater, coldly turning a way, as once more Woman's Rights throttled and threw down woman's love.

'No, Heaven forbid! I could no more be a tyrant than I could be a slave. My soul abhors both. And if in your own soul there is one quality that attracts me more than all the others, it is your impassioned love of liberty. I sympathise with it, my beloved. I have no wish to rule over you as a master. I could not, indeed, endure

the love of a slave. Or if one must serve, let it be the stronger. I wish only to cherish you as my beloved wife, to honour you as my liege lady! Come, darling.'

But Woman's Rights had her heel upon the neck of woman's love, and Britomarte coldly answered, as she walked away:

'I do not know, for my part, how in this age and country, with the old barbarous laws of marriage still in force, any sane, honest man can look a woman in the face, and seriously ask her to be his wife! For their own honour, I wonder men do not set about and remodel their disgraceful laws before they do anything else. As for me, if these days were like the "old heroic days" of which you just now spoke, when men braved deadly perils and wrought great works for woman's smile, I would have every woman lay upon her suitor the holy task of reforming the laws as the only possible condition of her favour!'

'From you and in my own person, I accept the challenge,' said Justin, turning good humouredly towards her, and in no degree abashed by the repulse she had given him. In truth, had Mr. Rosenthal's rival been anything more tangible than Woman's Rights, he might—I do not say that he would—have been discouraged or defeated. But to surrender to anything so visionary as that was not to be dreamed of. So he submitted to let Britomarte visit upon his devoted head the sins of all his sex, for a while.

'I will take up the gauntlet you have thrown down,' he continued. 'I will look into these offensive statutes that were made, by and by, some centuries before I was born, and for which, therefore, I do not see that I can be held individually responsible—'

'But you are responsible for them,' warmly interrupted Britomarte. 'Every man who lives under them, marries under them, sees women robbed and oppressed under them, without rising up to oppose them, is as much responsible for them as if he, and he only, had originally enacted them.'

'Granted that this is in a measure true. It shall be so with me no longer,' smiled Justin. 'I will examine these and wherever I conscientiously believe they need reform, I will labour zealously with pen and tongue, to reform them. But, in the meantime, as I cannot give my whole mind to any subject—not even to that—until my heart is set at rest, Britomarte, dear Britomarte, be my wife, and we will labour together loving zealously, in all good works.'

'I can not!—I will not. Do not ask me again. In the "old heroic days" you are so fond of quoting, a true knight performed his task before he ventured to sue for his reward.'

'And then?—and then, Britomarte?'

'He did not always get it,' answered the man-hater.

Justin bowed gravely to her and smiled quietly to himself.

They were walking away from Lond's Rock, where indeed they had already lingered too long, for the tide was now rising rapidly, threatening to cut off their retreat from the main.

CHAPTER VIII.

BRITOMARTE'S PLAN.

Some high and noble enterprise of good
I'll ponder till it shall possess my mind,
Become my pastime, study, rest and food,
And kindle in my heart a flame refined:—
Pray Heaven for fitness my whole soul to bend
To this my purpose—to begin pursuit
With thoughts all fixed, with feelings purely kind;
Strength to complete and with delight review,
And grace to give the praise where all is due.—*Carlos Wilcox.*

'But what then will you do, my child? I am an humble minister of God, even in his beneficent aspect of Father to the fatherless. As such I invite your confidence; trust in me.'

These words were spoken by the old Lutheran clergyman to the beautiful man-hater, as he bent kindly over her, holding her hand, on the morning after their departure from the Rainbows.

They were on board the Leviathan and within a few miles of Washington.

He had been urging upon her the oft-repeated, oft-rejected invitation to make his house her home. For the last time she had gratefully declined the offered hospitality.

'But what then will you do, my child?' he resumed, seeing that she remained silent and thoughtful. 'Your old grand-aunt has most unnaturally renounced you; nor indeed if she had not, would Witch Elms be a desirable home for you. The people that Miss Pole retains around her, and the rumours that are afloat about the place, make it particularly objectionable as a residence for a young girl.'

Still Miss Conyers looked down and pondered.

'My child, I cannot bear to part with you; knowing that you go out homeless,

friendless and penniless into this great battle-field of life.'

'I am strong enough and brave enough to hold my own and make my way,' said Britomarte.

'And proud enough, no doubt. But ah, my child, you are but a child, scarcely older than my own tender Minie. It hurts me—' And here the old minister's voice broke and his eyes filled with tears.

'Many young men have been thrown desolate upon the world at a much earlier age than mine, and they have succeeded very well,' said Miss Conyers, gently.

'But you are a young girl,' said the minister, sorrowfully.

'And I shall be glad to prove that a young girl can get on at least as well as a young man,' retorted the woman's champion, with a rising colour and beaming glance.

Evidently the Lutheran minister was getting upon very dangerous ground; and in the absorption of his thoughts with the interests of the orphan, he even did not suspect it; in fact, his next words plunged him deeper and deeper into the quicksands.

'Ah, Britomarte! Britomarte! you do not know the obstacles that beset the path of a woman struggling alone through the world,' he said, shaking his head.

Her brow suddenly flushed and her eyes flashed:

'Do I not? Oh, righteous Father in heaven! do I not know it? Dr. Rosenthal, I have sometimes happened to be out late at night, either in returning from some lecture or from evening worship at some church, and I have chanced to see some of my poor lost sisters in the street—driven there, driven there by cold and hunger and the peril of death from both! driven there because your diabolical laws and customs have not only barred against woman in almost every field of labour, but have reduced her to the lowest pittance of wages in those few fields in which you permit her to work. Take an instance—in any large clothier's or shoemaker's, or any other manufacturer's house where they employ men and women alike—they give their journeymen each from fifteen to twenty dollars a week, and find them a shop to work in and fire to work by; while they pay their journey-women or job-women, or whatever the poor victims may be called, each about two or three dollars a week, and them to find their own work-room, fire and light! The men work ten hours a day in their comfortable work-shop at the "establishment;" the women work eighteen hours out of twenty-four in their miserable garrets at home. The men do half as much work for four times as much money! the women do twice as much work for one-fourth as much money—'

—'My dear, I know it, but—'

—'Go a little higher,' vehemently continued Britomarte—'take the semi-professional classes—the teachers. Where the male teacher gets from ten to twelve hundred dollars a year, the female, for teaching the same branches and doing the same amount of work, gets but two hundred and fifty or three hundred—'

'I know it! I know it, my dear, but—'

'I have not done yet. When I was in Washington this spring, I heard it seriously mooted to employ women as clerks in the various departments, because they could be made to work cheaper! Shame! shame! shame!'

'Softly my child, softly! I heard that subject discussed too at the house of the Secretary of the Treasury. The argument was that women could be got to work cheaper than men, and not that they could be made to do so,' said Dr. Rosenthal, mildly.

'And where is the difference, I pray you? A woman has helpless infancy or infirm age depending on her for support; she cannot see them starve; she must work, even though it be less than one-half of what any man would deign to do the same work for; and she is even expected to be very humbly thankful to the self-styled lords of creation for giving her anything at all! What can she do? She has no voice in making your laws; you make them all for yourselves and for her, and make them all in your own favour. It is so brave to wrong the weak! It is so generous to rob the poor! It is so manly—to grind women down to the dust.'

How her cheeks flushed—how her eyes burned! What a beautiful, terrible storm flashed forth from the whole inspired face and form of the young man-hater.

The minister could hardly bear it.

'Heavens, Britomarte!' he began; but she ruthlessly interrupted him:

'I have a picture in my memory. In the city where I lately tarried there is a public school in two departments, male and female. Both have an equal number of pupils studying exactly the same branches. The principal of the male department is an old bachelor without family ties and he gets one thousand dollars a year. The principal of the female department is a widow with five young children, and she got two hundred and fifty dollars for doing the same work. Shame, I say! it is a burning shame to manhood!'

'My dear, it is. The old bachelor should be made to marry the widow and five children immediately, or give up his place to

some one who would,' interjected Dr. Rosenthal. He could not, for his life, help this little joke slipping out.

The earnest champion did not even deign to notice it. She left him in doubt as to whether she had heard it. She continued:

'And, after all, it is not the semi-professional class among working women that suffer the most, for these at least can get enough for their work to keep body and soul together. It is the still harder labouring and worse paid class, who fill the garrets of the tenement houses, working day and night to make fortunes for masters who afterwards build palaces up town, yet who do not pay these poor white slaves enough to enable them to keep off the severest pangs of hunger and cold, disease and death! You are all making a great stir about freeing the slaves of the plantations. The poor, helpless victims who, by oppression, hard work, grinding wages, starvation, freezing cold, are done to death, or, what is worse, driven to sin; whom, when you have brought them to this pass, you either send to prison to work for nothing, or to a hospital to become the subject of a clinic lecture, or to a dissecting-room as an object for young medical students to pull about. Oh, my sisters! my sisters! as Christ died to save the whole human race, so I would die to free you!'

She spoke passionately; her bosom was heaving, her cheeks were flushed, her eyes were flashing and full of tears.

'Britomarte! dear Britomarte!' began the minister, soothingly.

'Pass on, Dr. Rosenthal! I cannot bear to talk to a man to-day,' she said.

'Do not quarrel with me, my dear. I had no hand in making these laws or encouraging these customs.'

'You had! I beg your pardon for contradicting you, but you had, and you have!'

'I am not even a native of the United States.'

'You live under these laws without raising pen or voice to modify them. You profit by these customs without ever remembering that you do so. You asked me just now what I, a young, homeless, friendless, powerless woman, meant to do in rejecting your proffered hospitality. I will first tell you what I will not do. In the first place, so long as the barbarous law in claiming a woman to be wife makes her a necessity, I will not marry.'

'That is understood. Justin told me as much,' said the minister, mildly.

'In the second place, so long as your barbarous customs close half of woman's legitimate field of labour, and open the other half only to admit her to work at degrading rates of wages, I will not work for any wages whatever.'

'Then what in the world will you do?'

'In the third place so long as man continues to wrong woman, I will never accept assistance from any man whomsoever.'

'Then again I ask you, what will you do?'

'The Board of Foreign Missions are in want of teachers to join a company of missionaries they are about to send out to Farther India. I shall offer my services to go with them.'

'Miss Conyers, you amaze me!'

'It is better to labour for nothing in the vineyard of the Lord, among the heathen, than to slave here where your cruel laws and customs in regard to women dishonour Christianity. Dr. Rosenthal, again I thank you for your proffered hospitality; but I cannot accept it, for you also are *particeps criminis* in these wrongs of women.'

And when she had said this, she bowed with a grace and sweetness which was all the more beautiful for its contrast to the passion and earnestness of her former manner; and she left his side.

Justin Rosenthal strolled up and joined his father.

'Britomarte Conyers is mad!—as mad as a March hare—as mad as the maddest ranter at Tammany Hall or the maddest lunatic in bedlam!' exclaimed Dr. Rosenthal.

'No; she is only as mad as Luther—as mad as Erasmus—as mad as William Tell—or as Roland, or Joan of Arc, or any other hero, martyr, or reformer, whose indignant spirit ever rose up to do battle against wrong and oppression!'

'And a nice wife she would make!'

'She will make a noble one! for such a noble maiden can make nothing less! And I love her—I love her more than words can express. And I do not know whether I am the more happy in, or the more proud of, my love!'

'What is the use? she will never be your wife?'

'She will, my father. It is the first work I have on hand to make her so,' said Justin, confidently.

'Before even settling down to some parish?'

'Before doing anything, for we must begin our life labour together.'

'You had better be quick about it then, my boy. She is going out to Farther India,' said Dr. Rosenthal, chuckling.

'Ah, is that so? Well, no matter! Nothing on earth that she does shall interfere with my purpose of marrying her and beginning life with her by my side.'

'I wish you joy of your job, my boy.'

'She will be worth all the trouble. She is the noblest, finest spirit I have ever seen clothed with woman's form. I will marry her, and then I will labour for many of these very reforms she advocates. But the work of a reformer is a life-long one, so I must marry her first. I cannot wait.'

'But she says she will never marry until these very reforms are made.'

'She mistakes,' said Justin, with a slight smile.

'Lunacy is catching. I believe you are as mad as she is,' said Dr. Rosenthal, with something between a sigh and a shrug.

These conversations took place, as I said, on board the Leviathan mail steamer as she approached her Washington city landing, on the day after her departure from the Rainbows.

Britomarte, after leaving Dr. Rosenthal, went down into the cabin to put up her effects, to be ready for landing.

Erminie was already there, engaged in making similar preparations; but as soon as she saw Britomarte she threw herself into her friend's arms and burst into a passion of tears. The prospect of separation from her queen was almost insupportable to the minister's gentle child.

'If it were only in pity for me, Britty, you might not leave me. I have no mother, nor sister, nor any one in the world but you. In mercy to me you might come with me.'

'My darling—no one? Why, you have your father, your brother, and your lover,' said Miss Conyers, gently caressing her.

'Oh, I mean no woman. It is so sad for a girl to have no woman friend. I feel it so. And yet it is not for myself either that I grieve, but for you who have neither father, brother, nor lover, as I have.'

'No, thank Heaven,' exclaimed the man-hater, fervently; and then, with a softened manner, she added: 'But about your lover, my darling, since you are afflicted with such a nuisance—tell me, before we part.'

'Yes, I wished to do so. I have no secrets from you, dear Britomarte. Well, then—we—we are engaged,' murmured Erminie, with hesitation and blushes.

'You and—Colonel Eastworth,' muttered Britomarte, slowly and with dismay. 'Erminie, darling, it is customary to congratulate a friend on these occasions; but I—I cannot do it.'

'Oh, Britomarte, you will surely wish me joy.'

'With all my heart and soul, I pray that you may have life-long happiness, my dearest one,' said Miss Conyers, with a quivering voice.

'And you will not think that I shall love you less on his account, will you?'

'I do not know, dear. You do not know.'

'Oh, Britomarte it is so different from what you think. I do not love you less, but more, much more. Ah, indeed, it seems to me I love all the world more for loving him,' pleaded Erminie.

'Love, love, love, it is the whole burden of your thoughts and speech,' said Britomarte.

'Ah, but is it not the whole life of the world? Look at the sky, filled with the light of the sun, how it beams down upon water, as if it loved the water. And look at the water, how it smiles back to the sky, as if it loved the sky. And see yonder by the shore how the waves kiss the sand. And up among the trees, see, how the wind plays with the leaves, and how the leaves flutter with the wind, and lean together. All things love each other,' whispered Erminie, as if thinking audibly.

'"'Oman art thou, lunatics!' laughed Miss Conyers. 'This bright lover, the sky, sometimes grows black with clouds and storms, and comes down upon the water, and lashes it into such fury that all between them comes to swift destruction. The wind that dallies so fondly now with the trees, not infrequently gets into a rage, and tears them limb from limb! It is with man as it is with nature!'

'Britomarte, Britomarte, that is only telling me that there is a Satan as well as a God, and I know that before; but I believe that only God is omnipotent, and His name is Love,' said the minister's daughter, fervently.

'Yes, my dear, but his visible reign has not commenced on earth yet, nor is Satan bound. But tell me, Erminie, when is this marriage of yours to come off?'

'Oh, not for two years. Papa will not consent to part with me until I am eighteen years old.'

'In two years. Much may happen in two years,' murmured the man-hater; but in tones too low to meet the ears of her favourite.

'My dears, my dears, are you ready to go on shore?' called Dr. Rosenthal from the head of the cabin stairs.

'Yes, papa dear!—Oh, dear Britomarte, think again! come home with me!' pleaded Erminie.

'No, my darling. We must part here. Give me your parting kiss in this cabin, not on deck before all the men,' said Miss Conyers.

Erminie threw herself into the arms of Britomarte, and clung long and wildly to

her bosom, until a second and third summons from Dr. Rosenthal compelled her to let go her hold.

Then the two friends went up the stairs together.

The three gentlemen were waiting to escort them on shore.

Dr. Rosenthal placed his daughter in the carriage that was waiting for her; but when he would have led Britomarte to the same place, she courteously thanked him, and said that her way lay in another direction, and that she would go on foot.

Justin came forward and said:

'You will let me see you safe to the place where you are going?'

'No, thank you,' she replied.

Justin argued, pleaded, insisted, but all to no purpose. And at last she said:

'Mr. Rosenthal, since you compel me to say it, your attendance would be an intrusion.'

'Then I have nothing more to urge, Miss Conyers. We will meet again.'

'"At Philippi," ghost of Cæsar? Good bye, Mr. Rosenthal,' laughed Britomarte, waving her hand.

Justin bowed and left her, to enter the carriage where his party were waiting.

And Britomarte watched the carriage drive off and roll out of sight, and then she drew her black veil before her face, and walked on her way alone.

CHAPTER IX.

BRITOMARTE EMBARKS.

Oh, life! oh, silent shore
Where we sit patient! O, great sea beyond,
To which we look with solemn hope and fond,
But sorrowful no more!
We too were disembodied souls to-day,
And like white sea-birds wing to the Infinite Deep,—
Till then, Thou, Just One, wilt our spirits keep.—*Anon.*

Britomarte possessed a few jewels of value. These she had never worn or shown. She now took them to a jeweller on Pennsylvania Avenue, and sold them for enough to defray her expenses to the city, from whose port the missionary company was to sail.

On arriving at that city she found a cheap boarding house, and then sought out the secretary of the board of Foreign Missions, and offered her services to go as teacher with the company they were about to send out to Farther India.

The secretary required testimonials, which Britomarte immediately submitted. And then, after a little hesitation and investigation, her services were accepted. Britomarte formed acquaintance with some of her destined fellow-voyagers.

But what do you thing was proposed to the indignant man-hater? Something that nearly lost her services to the mission—namely, that she should become the wife of one of the young clergyman who was going out with the company. It was urged upon her that such was the custom, that it was expedient, and that young ladies called to the work not only married missionaries here where they had a full opportunity of knowing them beforehand, but that many of them also went out with the express understanding that they should marry, on the other side, missionaries that had never set eyes on before.

To all of this Miss Conyers firmly responded that she should never marry at all, and certainly not in that way; and that if she were not permitted to serve the mission according to her own conscience, she could not serve at all.

In reply to this, those who had proposed the obnoxious measure, good-humouredly apologized, and the subject was dropped.

Miss Conyers then devoted all her time and attention to making preparations for a sea voyage that was to last several months.

The missionaries were to sail on the first of October, in the great East Indiaman, Sultana, bound from Boston to Calcutta; but their destination was Cambodia.

When her preparations were completed, Britomarte wrote to her friend Erminie, informing her of all the particulars of the projected mission, and asking her for the last news of their own fellow graduates.

Quickly as the post could return, Miss Conyers received an answer from the affectionate girl.

And now that the missionary measure seemed irrevocable, Erminie did not distress her friend by any vain lamentations over her own loss. Little woman like, she praised, glorified, and rejoiced over her friend, and bade her God speed. She wrote that her brother Justin had just been ordained a minister of the Gospel, and that he was to leave soon for distant duty; but she did not say where he was going.

'So, then, our paths diverge forever, thank Heaven!' exclaimed the man-hater, as she read this part of the letter, but, indeed, her heaving bosom, and quivering lips, and tearful eyes did not look very much like thankfulness.

Erminie further stated that Colonel Bast-

worth had taken apartments at a first-class hotel in the city, with the intention of passing the ensuing winter there.

Of their late class-mates Erminie wrote:

'There is the mischief to play down in Henrico. It seems Vittorio Corsoni sued for the hand of Alberta Goldsborough, which was indignantly refused him by her father. Next he was refused admittance to the house by her mother; after which Miss Goldsborough, chancing to meet her lover in the streets of Richmond, coolly informed him that if they could not see each other in her own home, they could do so at the houses of their mutual friends, and at the same time announced that she should spend that evening with her school-mate Eleanora Lee. That evening you may be sure that the Signior Vittoria lounged into Judge Lee's drawing-room to pay his respects to a former patron.

'In this manner they contrived to meet everywhere where they were both acquainted, until at last, oh, Britomarte, they eloped! You don't know how shocked I was to hear it, and how ashamed I am to have to tell you! But you asked me for news, and I will keep back nothing.

'They made for the nearest point to cross into Maryland, where they could be legally married, notwithstanding she was under age. But Mr. Goldsborough, with two of her uncles, pursued and overtook them before they had crossed the boundary, and seized them both, as he had a right to do.

'Vittorio, they say, was dreadfully agitated, and even drew his sword-cane in defence of his lady love. But Alberta was as cool as ever, and bade him put up his sword and yield for the time being; for that, though their marriage was delayed, it was not prevented.

'Mr. Goldsborough talked of prosecuting Vittorio in a criminal court for stealing an heiress and minor. But Alberta calmly assured her father that in doing so he would only be degrading his future son-in-law, and by consequence his only daughter, for that she was resolved to give her hand to Vittorio upon the very first opportunity after she should become of age.

'Whether or not this announcement influenced Mr. Goldsborough's conduct I do not know; it is certain, however, that he did not prosecute Signior Vittorio; but he brought Alberta here, and placed her as a parlour boarder in the convent of the Visitation, where, behind grates and bars, she is secure from a second escapade.

'Mr. Goldsborough did not call on us until he had left his daughter in the convent, and then he only stayed long enough to tell us these facts before he left for Richmond. I called at the convent to see Alberta, but was refused a sight of her. She is in truth no less than an honourable prisoner there.

'And that is not all the trouble in Henrico county. I have a letter from Elfrida Fielding, in which she tells me all her secrets with the utmost candour, requesting me also to tell you, whom she supposes to be somewhere in our reach.

'Now who would have thought that wild little monkey, Elfie, would have acted, in similar circumstances, with so much more prudence and good sense and good feeling than has been displayed by our modal young lady? Yet so it was.

'Elfie has had a proposal from—whom do you think?—young Mr. Albert Goldsborough, who was intended for his cousin; but as she ran away with the flute-playing Italian, of course he could not be considered bound to her; so he followed the bent of his inclinations, and offered his hand to Elfie Fielding.

'The proposal was in every point of view a most eligible one for Elfie, and much better, she says, than she had any reason to expect. The young suitor was handsome, amiable, intelligent, and possessed of a large fortune, and last and most, he had the favour of his intended—but—he differed in politics with Elfie's "pap and two unks."

'Now you know what it is to differ in politics in these days—you have read how gray-haired senators take each other by the throat in the senate chamber. You have seen how it sets father against son, and mother against daughter; how it parts lovers and divides families; pray Heaven it may not some day come nigh to divide the Union!

'Elfie's "pap and two unks" are enlightened, far-seeing, and progressive men. Elfie's lover is a conservative, and believes in the eternal stability of "institutions" and the infallibility of the powers that be, etc. Elfie's lover, had he lived in the first year of the Christian era in Judea, would have been a Jew, and helped to crucify Christ. Had he lived in England at the time of the civil wars, he would have been a royalist. Or had his presence enriched the earth at the time of our own Revolution, he would have been a tory.

'Now you know, of course, it is an irreconcilable difference between Elfie's "pap and two unks" on the one hand, and her lover on the other. But Elfie won't run away with him, as he wishes her to do. She tells him plainly that he must convert her pap and two unks, or be converted by them, before she will endow him with her hand

and the reversion of the old gig, the blind mare, niggers, and other personals to which she is heiress; for though she don't care a pin for politics herself, she will have power in the family.

'I have here quoted little Effie's own words. Now who would have given that little monkey credit for so much wisdom and goodness.

'And in the meantime you see Mr. Goldsborough has his hands full between his cool, determined daughter and his self-willed, refine cry nephew; both of whom, instead of marrying with each other, and keeping the family estates together, to please their friends, have taken the liberty to choose partners for life to please themselves.

'But after all, as these marriages are not yet consummated, who knows but that young Mr. Goldsborough may "see his own interest," as the phrase goes, and persuade Alberta to "see her own duty," as the other phrase goes, and that they may yet marry and unite the two great branches of the great house of Goldsborough.

'But oh, I am wrong to write so lightly on such sacred subjects. How hard it is, dear Britomarte, to keep from sinning with one's tongue and pen! I hope that all these lovers will be true to themselves, and to God who is the Inspirer of all pure love. I hope they will wait patiently until they win their parents' consent and the reward of forbearance.'

There was much more of Erminie's letter, too much to quote. Sometimes the effervescent spirits of her youth would break forth in some such little jest as the above, and then she would quickly repent, and piously rebuke herself for such levity.

Her letter closed in one deep, fervent, heart-felt aspiration for Britomarte's happiness.

Britomarte's tears fell fast over this letter. This man-hater would like to have persuaded herself that she wept over the thought of the life-long separation from her bosom friend, or over the frailties of Alberta, or over the troubles of Effie, or over anything or anybody rather than over the memory of Justin Rosenthal. Erminie had written freely of Alberta and Elfride and their lovers; but she had mentioned her brother only to say that he had been ordained and was going away. And Britomarte could scarcely forgive her friend for such negligence. The name that was written in the letter 'Justin' she pressed again and again to her lips, while her tears dropped slowly and heavily upon the paper. Suddenly, with a start, she recollected herself and to punish herself for a moment's weakness, she deliberately tore up the letter and threw it away.

That old martyr who stretched out his right hand into the flames and held it there while it slowly burned to a cinder, had scarcely more resolution than this strange self-willed girl who had ruthlessly cast her own heart on the altar fire of her principles—or pride—and was grimly watching its death agony.

With all her heart she loved Justin, and would have died for him. With all her intellect she despised herself for loving him. And with all her will she would have seen him dead before she would have married him!

Ah, what awful, riving, rending stroke of fate was that which had fallen upon this young creature, dividing her against herself; utterly divorcing her intellect from her affections; making her, as it were, two beings—a loving, suffering heart and a repugnant, imperious intellect!

And who shall re-unite this severed nature and make this woman one? In other words, who shall heal this wounded spirit and make it whole?

Britomarte was glad that the day of sailing was so near at hand. Once away from the land, she hoped to leave all her weaknesses, as she called the holiest promptings of her nature, behind. Once on the ocean, she hoped to suffer 'a sea change into something new and strange,' namely, a woman free from the frailty of love.

On the same morning that she was to embark, she wrote a last, little letter to Erminie. It was only an acknowledgment of the receipt of Erminie's letter, and then a few short messages to friends and schoolmates, and lastly a farewell and 'God bless you.'

Britomarte went out and mailed this letter with her own hands, and then hurried back to her cheap boarding-house, to wait for the chartered omnibus that was to take the whole missionary party to the pier nearest the ship. Their luggage had been carried on board the previous afternoon. It was not a pleasant day for October. It was more like November. The sky was overcloaded. And there was a chill, penetrating east wind that threatened to blow up rain. Not a cheerful day to bid goodbye to one's native land, for an indefinitely long sea voyage, and a home among pagans.

So happened was Britomarte, sitting there alone with her trunks on, waiting for her companions, and looking out of the fogged window at the overcast sky, that at length she felt obliged to travel hands her humble

had and not strength and cheerfulness from Him who is both able and willing to give us all good gifts.

She had scarcely finished her petition before the stopping of wheels at the street door assured her that the omnibus had arrived.

She got up, threw a last farewell glance around the little room that had been her home for so many weeks, and then hurried down stairs, where her landlord and landlady stood to bid her good-bye. She shook hands with them and passed out. It was raining now—not with a fine, dashing, exhilarating shower such as characterises the atmosphere of the South, but with the chill, dark, depressing drizzle that is peculiar to the north-east coast of our country.

A gentleman stood on the sidewalk, with a large umbrella hoisted, ready to escort her from the door to the omnibus. He was the Rev. Mr. Ely, the very person who had been proposed as a husband for Miss Conyers. He had, however, found another sister who was willing to become his companion for life, and so Britomarte was forgiven.

'A wet morning,' he said, after bowing and extending his umbrella over the head of the young lady.

Britomarte thanked him, and permitted him to hand her into the omnibus, where she was introduced in form to the Rev. Mrs. Ely. Mr. and Mrs. Breton she already knew. These with herself were the five missionaries that were to go out to Further India.

The two young women were crying behind their veils. They were strangers to each other, and all but strangers to their husbands. One had come from the West, and one from the South, to marry these young men, and go out with them to India. They had now been married but a few hours, after an acquaintance with their intended husbands of but a few days. In a fever of enthusiasm, they had left all the familiar scenes and all the dear friends of their childhood and youth, to join their hands with strangers, and go out to a foreign land, to live and labour among heathens. No wonder they wept bitterly behind their veils as the omnibus rattled on over the stony streets and under the drizzling sky.

The two husbands did not seem to know how to console them. They did not even try to do it.

Britomarte watched the two brides for a few moments, and pity for them filled her bosom.

'Here are two young women,' she said to herself, 'who have allowed themselves to be deluded either by their own hearts, or by the eloquence of these young men. Poor things! how much better off they would be without these husbands.'

Then bending to the one that sat nearest to her, she whispered—

'I do not tell you not to weep, for weeping will relieve you; but I do bid you remember—"the greater the cross, the brighter the crown," and be comforted.'

'I know—ow it, and I do try,' sobbed the unhappy little messenger of glad tidings to the heathen. And she did heroically try to take comfort.

'And you?' said Britomarte, softly turning to her other companion.

'Oh, my poor father! My poor—oor father!' exclaimed this one, bursting into an uncontrollable fit of weeping.

'I am very sorry to see you grieve so,' said Britomarte, gently taking her hand.

'I- is for him! I was his youngest and his last, and he is old!'

'Why did you leave him, then, dear?' inquired Britomarte, utterly regardless of the presence of the 'natural enemy.'

'I thought it was my du—uty! They wanted somebody to go out with Bro—other Ely, and there was no one would consent to go, and so I thought it was somebody's du—uty!' sobbed poor little Mrs. Ely.

'And was your father willing to part with his only daughter?'

'He left it to m—e! He said if I had a call, he would "hinder me not." He said he would of—of—offer me upon the altar of sacrifice as Abraham offered Isaac,' sobbed the little woman.

'It was a noble sacrifice and made in pure singleness of heart, and God will surely comfort and strengthen him,' said Britomarte, very tenderly and seriously.

'Yes, I beli-ve that. I kn—ow it. My heart would break if I didn't. I shall never see him any more in this world, but he said we should meet in hea-aven!'

'That you surely will, my dear. But the Father of All Mercies will comfort you both even here, in this world—

'God hears your sighs and sees your tears—
God will lift up your head,'

said Britomarte, with infinite gentleness, as she stooped over and consoled this mourner. Indeed, one of the strangest peculiarities in her strange character was the contrast between the inflexible tenderness with which she loved her own sex and the inexorable sternness with which she regarded the other. There was a mixture of both these moods in the curious expression of her countenance as she turned from the wailing woman to

look at the man with whom that woman's fate was joined. The look somewhat reassured her.

'When the little creature has ceased to grieve for her father, she will begin to govern him, which is better than might have been hoped,' she thought.

The omnibus, meanwhile, had bumped them very rapidly over the stony streets, and it now brought them up in her abruptly to the pier where they were to get out.

It was still raining steadily, with that dark, deadly, depressing drizzle that has not its counterpart anywhere else on the face of the earth, as I do hope and believe.

The two gentlemen got out, and hoisted their umbrellas, and assisted the ladies to alight.

On the pier was a crowd of the church members, consisting of men, women and children, in omnibuses, in cabs and on foot, the latter having large umbrellas hoisted, all waiting to see the missionaries off.

Beside the pier was chained a large boat, waiting to take the voyagers to that magnificent three-decker, East Indiaman, that rode at anchor about half a mile out in the harbour.

There were hearty, there were sorrowful, and there were cheering greetings exchanged between the missionaries and their friends, accordingly as they happened to belong to the laughing or crying school of philosophy.

On account of the inclemency of the weather, it was decided that the friends should not attempt to accompany the little band of missionaries to the ship, but should take leave of them on the pier. So there they parted, with many a mutual and fervent 'God be with you,' and 'God bless you.'

The two gentlemen handed the ladies down into the boat and then followed them.

And at the last moment, just as the boat was putting off from the pier, two of the brethren from among the crowd that was left behind simultaneously decided that they could not let this little band go off alone, and that they must go with them and see the last of them, and so they hastily jumped down into the boat, to the serious imperilling of its equilibrium.

Seats were found for them. The umbrellas were all hoisted. The steersmen took the helm and the four oarsmen laid themselves to their oars, and the boat moved.

Ah! who can describe the feelings with which one for the first time leaves the firm land for the unstable sea? and their dear native soil for unknown regions?

Even on the row-boat two of the young women were nervous and frightened.

Miss Conyers, I hope you know, was superior to such weakness.

Their trial, however, was a short one. In less than fifteen minutes they were alongside of the great behemoth of a ship that lay upon the waters like some stupendous monster of the deep.

An officer stood upon the deck as if waiting to welcome them. And some sailors were letting down a rope ladder from the lofty deck to the boat. But to attempt to climb up the side of that ship by that means seemed like trying to crawl up the side of a three-story house by the rain pipe. The two brides were frightened nearly out of their senses at the bare thought.

But Britomarte volunteered to go first, and she set her foot on the lowest, slack rung of the ladder, and took hold of the side ropes and began to climb; Mr. Breton followed close behind her, to keep her from falling, and also to keep her skirts in order; and Captain McKenzie bending from the deck and holding down his hand to help her up on board.

So Miss Conyers safely boarded the ship, and after bowing her thanks to the captain, turned around and looked down with a smile to encourage her companions to make the attempt to follow her example.

Mrs. Ely ventured next, and Britomarte stooped and extended a hand to hoist her up on deck. Then Mrs. Breton essayed successfully, and soon the whole party stood by her side.

The boat was to wait alongside to take back the two brethren who were to return to the city. And these two last lingered as long as possible. They were loth to leave the little band till the last minute, for who could tell to what fate they were about to leave them, or when, if ever, they should all meet again?

It was still raining steadily, and the deck was very wet. In addition to which disagreeable circumstance the sailors were all very busy and very noisy, getting ready to make sail.

So one of the brethren proposed that their party should adjourn to the cabin and engage in prayer together once more before parting. Accordingly they went below and remained in prayer or mutual exhortation until the warning cry, 'All hands ashore!' notified them that the parting moment had come.

They went back upon deck; and there, with tearful eyes, and trembling lips, and

clasped hands, and fervent benedictions, the last adieux were spoken.

The two brothers went back in the little boat; but before she had reached the pier, the signal gun was fired and the Sultana stood out to sea.

CHAPTER X.

LIFE ON THE SHIP.

She rides majestic, with her swelling sails!
The gallant bark! along her watery way,
Onward she drives before the favouring gales,
Now flying at their length the streamers play,
And now they ripple with the ruffling breeze.
—*Southey.*

Raining heavily as it was, this little band of voyagers stood upon the deck, leaning over the bulwarks, under their large umbrellas, watching the slowly receding shores of their dear native land.

It is a bore to be always describing persons; yet there are some readers who always like to be made acquainted with the personal appearance of every character of which they read. I suppose I must tell how Britomarie's four companions looked.

First the two brides were of the most common type of American female beauty. They were both tall, slender and graceful in form, with pale, delicate intelligent feature, and rather dark hair, eyes and eyebrows, and with such difference in the details of their personality as sufficed to individualise them. They both wore brown merino dresses and cloaks, and mixed straw bonnets, trimmed with brown ribbon. These travelling dresses were a present from the 'society,' and were exactly alike.

The two bridegrooms were good specimens of the ordinary American professional man—tall, thin, stooping, with dark hair, sallow complexions, hollow cheeks and high features; but in no other respect were these two men alike—they would never have been taken for brothers. They were both dressed, not in clerical black, but in good, serviceable, sea-worthy suits of dark gray.

They stood, as I said, under their umbrellas, in the heavy rain, watching through blinding tears the slowly receding shores of their dear native land.

And if, instead of rain and wind, there had been snow and sleet, or thunder and lightning, would they not have stood amidst the wildest fury of the storm, and watched those loved shores till they faded out of sight—aye, watched them as fondly as they would have watched the dying face of a dear friend?

Ah! could they have foreseen the horrible disasters awaiting themselves and their doomed ship in the far off Indian Ocean, and the dreadful perils and privations through which they were fated to pass, before any one of them should return to see those shores again!

Or worse, far worse! could they have foreseen that awful tornado of civil war destined to sweep over the whole country, carrying devastation in its track, and shaking the stability of the nation to its foundation!

Could they, I say, have prevised all this, with what anguish, horror and despair they would have gazed upon those shores!

Fortunately no prophetic shadow of the future darkened their vision, dark enough already with the double mist of tears and rain, through which they view the fading land.

Some little natural misgiving they, indeed, might have felt, in leaving the firm land for the unstable ocean, but it was no more than all landsmen experience in putting to sea the first time, and which they get over in the first voyage, and forget in the second.

They stood gazing at the waning shore until Mrs. Breton, with a shiver, remarked:

'I have heard it said that it is unlucky to watch anything quite out of sight, for that it is a sign we shall never see it again.'

'Nonsense, my dear,' said Mr. Breton; 'but at least it is certainly unlucky to stand out here in the rain any longer, being a sure sign that we shall take cold. Let us go below.'

'Oh no, no no; not quite yet, please. Let us see the last of the dear land. Heaven knows if we shall ever see it again!' pleaded Mrs. Ely.

'We have seen the last of it, dear,' said Miss Conyers, softly. 'That dark line along the western horizon is not the land, but a long, low-lying cloud.'

'Yes, I believe you are right,' said Mr. Ely, taking a small telescope from his pocket, and pointing it.

They all turned sadly away, and went down into the cabin that was set apart for their exclusive use during the voyage.

Now, if I describe this cabin and its communicating state-rooms, it is because I wish to show my young readers, who have never been on the ocean, the manner in which people go to housekeeping in a great sailing-ship, for a long sea-voyage.

This cabin was the size of a large family parlour. It was fitted up with a green bras-

sofa carpet, and with arm-chairs and other chairs and sofas and foot-stools, all covered with green damask to suit the carpet. There was a large marble-top centre table, with a metal pitcher and metal tumblers, all set into fixed forms to keep them safe when the ship happened to roll. At the end of the cabin, opposite the stairs by which you came down, there was a marble-top pier table, and above it, a tall looking-glass in a gilt frame. You could stand before this glass and look in it and see reflected all that was going on on deck before the cabin door.

There were four little state-rooms opening out of this cabin—that is to say, two on each side. Number One, on the right-hand side as you came down the stairs, was appropriated to the Rys. Number Two, next to it on the same side, was assigned to Miss Conyers. Number Three, on the left-hand side of the stairs, was given to the Bretons. Number Four was vacant.

When our voyagers got down into their cabin, the first things they noticed were their large trunks, each trunk set down near the state-room of the owner.

'Come,' said Miss Conyers cheerfully to her female companions—'this cabin is as comfortable as any house parlour, and it is so pleasant to have it all to ourselves, with all our little state-rooms opening into it. We can be as quiky or as social as we please. We can shut ourselves up in our state-rooms, or we can gather together in the cabin. Now then, since this is to be our home for several months, let us get ourselves comfortably to housekeeping. And the first thank to do is to unpack our trunks and arrange their contents in the drawers of our state-rooms. And then we can put the empty trunks out of the way in that vacant Number Four, until we want them.'

Saying which, Britomarte opened the door of Number Two, and dragged her heavy trunk into it. Then closing the door, she set herself to work.

As all four of these state-rooms were exactly alike, it is only necessary to describe Number Two to give you a correct idea of the other three.

Like the others, Number Two was a large state-room intended for two persons. But as Britomarte was alone, she had it all to herself. On the right hand as she entered the door, there were two berths—an upper and a lower one, made up into little white beds and having green damask curtains drawn before them. Britomarte decided to sleep in the lower berth; so she placed her bonnet, mantle, gloves and veil upon the upper and drew the curtain before it. Opposite the lower berth was a broad sofa. Between them the floor was covered with a strip of green Brussels carpeting. At the end of the room opposite the door was a marble-top wash-stand, with a little drawer above and about below. It was fitted up with basin, ewer, &c. Above this stand was a shelf for toilet articles, and over that hung a little looking-glass in a gilt frame. Lastly, this little room was lighted by a small sky-light from the deck above.

Britomarte's trunk filled up nearly all the space between the lower berth and the sofa on each side, and the door and the wash-stand at each end. So she opened her trunk and lifted out all its contents and placed them temporarily on the sofa. Then she dragged the empty trunk out and stowed it away in the vacant state-room.

She went back and looked about for the drawers that she knew ought to be among the fixtures of her room. And she found them, filling up all the space under the lower berth and under the sofa. There were two deep drawers under the berth and two similar ones under the sofa. In these she neatly arranged her wardrobe and other effects for the voyage.

Then she put her toilet apparatus in order on the little wash-stand and on the shelf under the looking-glass. Finally she hung up her travelling-bag beside the glass.

She had worked diligently, as those work who wish to banish thought.

Now that all was done, the lonely girl looked around upon the comfortable arrangements and sighed with a strange new consciousness of solitude and desolation of spirit.

With an impatient shake, she tried to throw off the gathering gloom; and she selected from her small collection of books a volume of Travels in India, and sat down upon the sofa to occupy her mind with reading of the country to which she was going.

Now, certainly, though there were some thrilling descriptions of terrible adventures with the wild beasts in the jungles, that might have raised her hair on end in sympathetic horror, yet there was nothing whatever in the narrative to draw forth those slowly gathering, heavily falling tears that dropped, one by one, on the open page.

In truth, Britomarte knew not what she read. The vision of a good man's face floated in between her and the book—a thoughtful, loving, noble face, framed in with dark auburn hair and beard, and lighted up by the grave, earnest, compelling eyes that held her very soul enthralled, and would not let it go.

The man-hater dashed the tears from her eyes, clenched her hands and turned her

head with an angry shake, rolling all her beautiful tresses as an enraged lioness ruffles her mane. But all in vain; for the vision would not depart from her or let her go.

At length she dropped the book, covered her face with her hands and wept bitterly. And thus the woman's heart avenged itself upon the woman's intellect.

She wept so long, that before the storm of tears had spent its passion, she was disturbed by a knock at her door.

'Who is there?' she demanded.

'Only I, dear. We are going to dinner. Are you ready?' said the voice of Mrs. Ely.

'I shall be in a moment,' said Miss Conyers.

And she arose and bathed her face and smoothed her hair, and arranged her dress, and went out to join her companions, who were waiting to go to the dinner-table, which was laid in the dining saloon directly over their cabin.

As there were no other passengers, they had no companions at the table, except the captain, two of his mates, the surgeon and the supercargo, making, with themselves, a party of ten.

Captain McKenzie sat at the head of the board and did the honours as host. He was a tall, spare, large-boned son of Caledonia, with high features, sanguine complexion, and red hair and beard.

The conversation ran upon the weather, of course. The weather-wise agreed that because it would be three days before they would have a change of the moon, therefore it must be three days before they could have a change of weather, when at the new moon the sky would clear off cold with a sharp wind from the north-west.

The captain had a genial and kindly nature, spiced with a little Scotch humour. He was very solicitous for the contentment of his passengers, hoping that they would consider themselves quite at home—make themselves comfortable—and order whatever they wanted; and whatever they ordered they should have, he said, unless to procure it it should be necessary to 'bout the ship and put back into port, in which case he could not promise.

The surgeon was a short, stout, bald-headed, round-bodied little Dutchman, named Van Duyck. He was an erudite scholar, skillful practitioner, and jovial companion.

The supercargo and the two mates were agreeable young men; and altogether, the company was much pleasanter than the weather.

After dinner, as it was raining harder than ever, and the deck was very wet, and the motion of the ship was beginning to be felt, the ladies left the gentlemen and returned to their cabin.

It was certainly very depressing, this state of things, and the two brides began to weep.

Britomarte addressed herself to the task of consoling them.

'Come,' she said, 'let us get our needle-work. There is certainly a sedative influence in a needle. We will work until tea-time; and as we have all left our native land to be companions in a long voyage, and fellow-labourers in a foreign field, we will each of us in turn tell the others as much as we like of our history. What do you say?'

'Willingly!' said Mrs. Ely, wiping her eyes.

'I shall like it,' said Mrs. Breton.

'Then you begin, dear,' said Britomarte, addressing Mrs. Ely.

In truth there was very little to tell. Mary Ely was the daughter of a retired old merchant of Baltimore, who was a man of great piety, and who had been willing to give up his only child to the missionary work, and seemed really happy in the belief that he had offered to God an acceptable sacrifice. She had married the Rev. John Ely with all the esteem and regard she could possibly feel for a worthy young man whom she had only known by reputation.

Martha Breton had been an orphan from her birth. But she, too, had felt 'a call' to leave the friends of her youth, to become the co-labourer of the young missionary, James Breton. And she hoped to make him a good wife.

When Miss Conyers' turn came, whatever she might have been able to tell of herself, she told but very little, confining her narrative exclusively to her school days and school friends.

Certainly there was not much in the short histories of these young lives to tell to hear, but they served, as Miss Conyers intended they should do, to while away the tedious hours of the dull afternoon in the cabin, and to draw the bonds of sympathy closer between the young voyagers.

Under the circumstances in which these young women found themselves, friendship ripens very rapidly. They talked together until the dull afternoon deepened into twilight; and by the time the young men came to take them in to tea, they had begun to call each other Mary and Martha and Britomarte.

'What! no light!' said Mr. Ely, as he came stumbling down the cabin stairs.

'No, we were talking; we did not think

ens yet. Miss Conyers, whom we have elected to be our Cabin Queen, says it is pleasanter to sit and talk in the twilight,' answered Mary Ely.

'Well, come up now; tea is ready,' said Mr. Breton, who came stumbling after his friend.

The tea-table in the saloon above wore a very cheerful aspect, notwithstanding the rainy evening.

The 'kindly Scot,' Captain McKenzie, had lighted all the lamps in the swinging chandeliers that hung above, and had lighted several extra lamps besides, and set them on the table to make the place as bright as possible; and he had rifled his stores of their choicest West India sweet-meats and Scotch marmalades for the delectation of the ladies. And to tell the truth, the two brides, though their eyes were still red with recent weeping, did full justice to these dainties; for youth can eat and weep at the same time, and enjoy the luxury of tears and of the table simultaneously.

There was also at the table, the old Dutch doctor, the young Irish supercargo and two new mates. The captain had four, but two of them always took turns with the other two to remain on deck.

After tea, the ladies again left the gentlemen with the officers of the ship and went down into their cabin.

Here was a bright change.

The cabin was lighted up by a chandelier that hung from the ceiling, and make everything look brighter than it had done by day—shining down on the marble table, with its water metal service, and on the bright green carpet, and bright green chairs and sofas, and on the gilded mirror, and on the white doors of the state-rooms, and finally on the figure of a stranger whom they had never seen before.

This was a handsome young Irish woman, who was flitting about the cabin, and in and out among the state-rooms carrying into each fresh water, clean towels, night tapers, and everything else that was needed for the evening and the morning.

The man-hater, whose heart warmed to every creature in the form of woman, immediately made acquaintance with her.

She was a very tall and fine-looking woman, with a well-developed form, regular features, ruddy complexion, and great black eyes and eyebrows, and rich black hair, of which a duchess might have been proud. She was dressed in a purple stuff skirt and a green cloak, and had a red silk handkerchief tied over her head and under her chin. And this gaudy brightness of colouring did not seem amiss in the attire of this Galwegian peasant woman, who looked so like a gipsy queen.

'You are the stewardess of this cabin?' said Miss Conyers, kindly.

'Yes, ma'am,' said the woman, not ceasing to polish off the marble table which she was rubbing as she spoke.

'Then, as we are to be a long time together, I hope we shall be good friends.'

'Thank you, ma'am.'

'This voyage appears to be a very formidable one to me and my friends; but to you, I dare say, it does not seem so. You have made several voyages to India, perhaps,' said Miss Conyers.

And her two young companions looked at the stewardess with a sense of consolation in the contemplation of a woman like themselves who had sailed to India and come back safe, several times, and who was not afraid!

'Yes, ma'am. My father is carpenter on this ship, and I am all that belongs to him; and I always go when there are any lady passengers, as there most always is,' answered the woman.

'Were you ever sea-sick, stewardess?' inquired Mrs. Ely.

'No, ma'am, sure; not since the first time.'

'Do you ever get frightened in a storm, stewardess?' inquired Mrs. Breton.

'Sure, yes, ma'am, sometimes, when the ship is rowing, till it's like the keel is as often uppermost as the deck, and the waves rising and the clouds lowering till ye can't tell the say from the sky!'

'Oh! and then what do you do?' inquired Mrs. Ely, with a scared look.

'Sure there's but one thing to do, ma'am—I fall on my knees and pray.'

'Will there be many storms on this voyage, do you think, stewardess?' asked Mrs. Breton.

'Well, ma'am, judging from what I have seen before, I should think there might be. We have got to meet the trade winds. And then, in going round the cape, we always have dirthy weather, and in the Indian Say we have the typhoon.'

'Oh, dear! oh, dear! that is very dreadful, stewardess!' shuddered Mrs. Ely.

Miss Conyers thought it was time to put a stop to this terrifying conversation; so she smilingly said:

'You have survived them all, however, stewardess! But it is very awkward for us to be always calling you "stewardess." Will you tell us your name?'

'Judy, ma'am—Judy Riordon.'

'Judy Riordon. That is Judith Riordon. The name suits you, Judith, for you are

really not unlike a picture I have seen of that Judith who cut off the head of Holofernes,' said Miss Conyers, looking admiringly upon this handsome Irish peasant.

'Sure, then, my lady, you're not thinking I look like a murtherer!' said Judith in dismay.

'She was no murderess. She cut off the head of the pagan leader, but she did it in the service of the Lord.'

'Was she a saint, thin, ma'am?'

'I think she was,' said the man-hater, emphatically.

'Thin, sure, I'm glad I look like her, ma'am, though, faith, I don't think I could cut off the head of a man entirely, even in the service of the Lord.'

'I could, Judith.'

'Save us, ma'am! could ye?'

'Under similar circumstances, Judith.'

'Than ye are betther nor meself, ma'am. But sure me name is not Judith, at all! It is Judy, as me mother's was before me. And with your lave, ma'am, she's been a saint in Hivven these tin year.'

While Judith spoke, the gentlemen were heard coming down into the cabin, and the gipsy queen hastily gathered up her dusting cloth, brushes and water-can, and retired.

'I am afraid you have all been very dull down here,' said Mr. Ely, who was the first to enter.

'Not at all. We have been talking with the stewardess. She is quite a character,' answered his wife.

The two young men came and seated themselves at the table, with the evident intention of trying to make themselves entertaining, but they did not know how to go about it.

The young women drew their little needlework from their work-baskets, and began to be busy.

'What sort of weather is it above?' inquired Mrs. Breton.

'Raining, still raining as if it never meant to stop,' said her husband. And then silence fell. It was now but seven o'clock, and there were at least three dreadful hours to get rid of before the earliest bed-time.

The young men seemed to have nothing to do and little to say. Their company, indeed, was not exhilarating. The dull evening threatened to deepen into a dismal one. Britomarte looked at her two female companions, and saw that they were ready to cry again. Then an inspiration came upon her. Raising her beautiful voice in one of the most sublime strains of sacred music, she began to sing that grand old hymn that has comforted many a struggler. She changed three of the words, because, she said, we are none of us "saints of the Lord." She sang:

"How firm a foundation, ye children of God,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word!
What more could he say to you than he hath said,
You who to Jesus for refuge hath fled?

"'When through the deep waters I call you to go,
The oceans of woe shall not you overflow;
For I will be with you, your trial to bless,
And sanctify to you your utmost distress.'"

She sang the whole hymn, but it is too long to quote here. When she began to sing, her hearers were at first a little surprised; but as she went on they became entranced and exalted. One by one they joined her. Her voice, as I think I told you before, was a clear, pure, elastic soprano. The two ladies joined her timidly at first, singing second. Then Mr. Ely's voice struck in with its deep bass, and Mr. Breton sang tenor. But all their notes seemed to be upborne by the winged voice of Britomarte, which seemed to soar and cleave the air like some heaven-bound bird.

When the hymn was finished, and their voices died away in silence, that silence, deep and impressive, remained unbroken for some minutes. All felt stirred and exalted by the marvellous power of the singer, but none paid her the idle compliment of telling her that which she already knew—what a wonderful gift she possessed.

At length Mrs. Ely whispered:

'Sing it again—oh! please sing it again, or something else in the same spirit. It does us so much good.'

Miss Conyers smiled and looked around upon her companions. Seeing that their faces seconded Mrs. Ely's petition, her voice once more arose in that glorious old hymn of Sir Walter Scott, beginning:

'When Israel of the Lord beloved,
Out from the land of bondage came,
Her father's God before her moved,
An awful guide in clouds and flame!'

The effect of this hymn was even more impressive and exalting than that of the last. All joined in as before. And it was only when they ceased, that Britomarte discovered they had a larger audience than she had anticipated. The captain, the

doctor, the supercargo, and three of the mates were gathered at the cabin door, at the head of the stairs, listening to the singing. On being seen, however, they disappeared.

The little party sang several other hymns, psalms, and sacred songs, suitable to their circumstances; and when their impromptu concert was over, they had evening prayers together. And then, though it was still early, not yet ten o'clock, they bade each other 'good night,' and separated to retire to their several state-rooms.

Indeed it was necessary for all to lie down as soon as possible. The ship was riding on the swell of the sea, and rolling sickeningly. Even Britomarte, after she had got into her state-room, reeled about. She had exchanged her day-dress for a night-wrapper, and turned into her berth. Then, indeed, the rocking that had been so nauseating to her while she was in an upright position changed its character, and became delightfully lulling, soothing and sedative. And like an infant in a cradle she was rocked to sleep.

She slept a deep and dreamless sleep until late the next morning.

But oh! that next morning. First of all, on waking, she saw by the splashing upon the skylight that it was raining as fast as ever. And she had scarcely noticed this fact when the skylight, which ought to have remained overhead, was away down under foot somewhere. And she herself, instead of being on one side of the state-room, was one instant up to the ceiling, and the next down to the floor. In a word the ship was rolling horribly.

Britomarte lifted her head with the intention of rising, but dropped it immediately, for it felt like a lump of lead, and the whole room swam before her like a mist, darkening her eyes.

Let us pass as rapidly as possible over the next three days, merely saying for that time it rained hard, with an east wind dead ahead, that drove up the waves in hills against the struggling ship, which was tossed heavily from stem to stern; and all the passengers were dreadfully seasick; and the stewardess was very busy; and no sound was heard in the cabin but moans, groans and complaints; and no food was eaten there but beef-tea and water-gruel, that was carried into the state-rooms in small bowls, and brought out in——wash basins.

At length, on the morning of the fourth day, the sufferers began to get better. The two young men were the first to recover and show themselves.

Miss Conyers was the next, and her recovery was as prompt as it was sudden.

On that morning Judith Riordan had brought her a cup of black tea and a plate of dry toast, all seasoned with the cheering news that the wind had shifted to the north-west, and that it was clearing off 'b eautiful entirely.'

And furthermore that 'the gintlemin, bless thim,' had got well and gone to breakfast, and 'the ladies, Lord betune thim and harm, were much better, the darlings.'

On trying the experiment, Britomarte found that she could raise her head without losing all idea of the whereabouts of her other members; and, moreover, that she could relish her tea and toast and also keep them on her stomach; then, on making another mighty venture, she discovered that she could actually get up and dress herself.

And finally she walked out into the cabin, 'clothed and in her right mind.'

'Are the gentlemen up at breakfast, did you say, Judith?' she inquired.

'Sure yes, ma'am, they're jist afther going up.'

'And the ladies?'

'Sure, ma'am, they're in bed yet, the craythurs.'

'Then I'll pay them each a visit, I think,' said Miss Conyers, and she went and knocked softly at Number One.

A soft, weak 'Come in,' authorized her to open the door and enter.

Mary Ely was lying on the berth looking very pale and feeble.

Miss Conyers approached her cheerfully, however, saying—

'How do you do? I hope you are getting better, like I am. I feel like a new creature this morning.

'Do you? Oh, I wish I did! I have had a dreadful time. But what do you think was the very worst of it all? Why, having to be nursed by a strange young man like Brother Ely. Oh, it was horrid! How I did wish that I was you.'

Britomarte, the man-hater, winced and frowned as if she had been stung. Then in a pity to the tweed little pale face that was turned up to hers, so trustingly, she said—

'But he was your husband, you know, dear; your husband, who had vowed before God to cherish you in sickness and in health.

'Oh, yes, and he was very good, waiting on me when he was scarcely able to wait on himself; but still I did so much wish, while I was so deadly sick, he would go away

and say on if I got better acquainted with him.'

'Yes, dear; I dare say it was very embarrassing to you; but it is all over now,' said Britomarte, stooping and kissing the poor little face; and then adding with a smile—'And now I have come to get you up.'

'Oh, dear, you are very good; but I could not lift my head. I know I couldn't; I haven't lifted it for three days.'

'Then it is time you had. What have you taken for breakfast?'

'Oh, nothing at all. I didn't dare to try. I haven't been able to keep anything on my stomach since Monday.'

'[illegible]t is time you had,' said Miss Co[illegible]mis. And she stepped out into the [illegible] and told Judith to bring to Number One just such a cup of tea and plate of toast as she had brought to Number Two.

And when these refreshments were ready, Miss Conyers persuaded her young friend to go through all the experiments that she herself had tried so successfully.

And finally she brought Mary Ely out into the cabin and ensconced her comfortably in one of the easy-chairs.

'Not a rocking one, if you please,' pleaded the dizzy creature. 'I have had rocking enough to last me the remainder of my life.' So she was put in a steady chair.

And next Miss Conyers went into Number Three to look after the remaining patient.

She found Martha Bolton just as pale, feeble and despondent, and just as incredulous of the possibility of breakfasting and rising and dressing, as Mary Ely had been. But Miss Conyers resorted to exactly the same means and had the same success with the one as with the other.

And she led Martha Bolton out in triumph and placed her in another chair.

'About noon you must both try to get up on deck. It is very fine up there now, and the fresh air will give you strength and appetite to go to the dinner table,' she said.

And then, as she heard the two young men coming down the cabin stairs, she went into her state-room and put on her bonnet, cloak and gloves, and then came out to go up on deck.

As she passed through the cabin she bowed and smiled at the two young husbands who were standing near their wives, bending over them with looks of affectionate solicitude.

That supplementary smile was a wonderful favour from her—the man-hater—if they had but known it.

CHAPTER XI.

A STUNNING ENCOUNTER — A LOVER'S PERSISTENCE.

What care I for thy carelessness?
I give from founts that overflow,
Regardless that their power to bless,
Thy spirit cannot feel or know.

I give thee love as God gives light,
Apart from merit or from prayer,
Rejoicing in its own delight,
And freer than the boundless air.

—*Anonymous.*

When Britomarte reached the deck she was repaid for the effort she had made. First she found, though the motion of the ship was still very great, it no longer made her dizzy, and that she could keep her feet very well, for every breath of the pure strong air renewed her strength.

Then she saw that after the 'dirty weather' the sailors had made all tidy and the deck was clean and dry.

There were but few sails set, the main top sail, the fore course and the jib, for the ship was flying before a fine strong north-west wind—a fair wind, since her course was south-east.

Walking forward, Britomarte thought the deck was almost deserted; but looking aft, she saw a group of gentlemen and officers gathered near the steerage; so she went on and seated herself alone on one of the coils of rope stowed against the bulwarks.

Her eyes wandered over the scene.

What a grand, sublime and glorious round it was. This blue and boundless sea, undulating under the blue and boundless sky. One vast circle of air above, one vast circle of water below. Not a bird to be seen in all the air, not a sail to be seen on all the sea.

Their own lonely ship was the centre of this circle and the only one within it. The solitude of this scene was even more stupendous than its vast scope.

Gazing, Britomarte sank into thought, then into dream, then almost into trance.

What past life was the beautiful man-hater living over again in that self-forgetting reverie?

Whatever it was, it wrapt her whole soul in an abstraction so profound, that she did not hear the approach of a footstep, though that step rang clearly and firmly upon the deck; nor did she see the form that stood

beside her, though that form sheltered her from the flying spray that had begun to wet her clothing, nor did she become conscious of the intruder's presence until he stooped to her ear and breathed her name:

'Miss Conyers!'

She started and looked up.

Justin Rosenthal stood before her, looking tenderly down into her face.

'My ——!'

In her amazement she uttered the name of the Most High.

In the first shock of her surprise she gazed at him with wildly dilated eyes, as though he had been an apparition from the unseen world, and she seemed to think that she was in a dream, or that she had lost her reason. Then, as the certainty, the reality of the present rapidly grew upon her—as she became conscious that it was he, himself Justin Rosenthal, her lover and her beloved, that was standing before her—an overwhelming rush of joy filled her soul, and before she had time to control her countenance, this joy beamed and radiated from every feature of her beautiful face. It was as if the womanhood kept bound and captive in the lowest depths of her heart by pride and principle, had suddenly burst her chains and looked forth in liberty and light. It was but for one instant this womanhood showed itself, for in the next the manchester re-asserted her supremacy, and put a strong guard upon her countenance.

'Well?' said Justin, answering her various changes of ocean essence with a trusting smile.

'You here!' she exclaimed.

'Yes.'

It was but a word, calmly spoken, but it told everything.

'Why are you here?' she demanded sternly.

But that assumption of sternness came too late. He had seen the transient flash of an exceeding great joy on her face, and even if he had ever entertained any doubt as of her real feelings towards him, those doubts were now forever dispelled.

He seated himself beside her, and then answered:

'You ask me why I am here. I am here because I love you, have faith in you, and hope to win you as my wife.'

'As your slave, you mean. How dare you?' exclaimed the marriage remonstrant, with burning cheeks and flashing eyes.

'No, no, Britomarte; but as my wife and equal, and if not so—be my wife and liege lady, for if one must serve, let it be the stronger. I have said all this to you before.'

'And I have answered all this before, to the effect that I would never be your wife. In the present state of the laws, no circumstance in this world could induce me to marry; and if any power in Heaven could compel me to do so, and leave me the freedom of choice, you are the last man in the boundless universe that I would choose!' exclaimed Britomarte, indignantly.

'But why?' questioned her lover, with provoking calmness.

'"Why?" Do you ask me "why?" Because you are a natural born despot, full of dogged persistence to enforce your will, when you can. You are a man who, if you had lived in these mediæval ages which you are so fond of extolling, and had loved a woman who did not return your love, would have stormed her castle and carried her off captive to your own,' said the man-hater, savagely.

Her lover dropped his bearded chin upon his chest, and seemed to be engaged in the duty of self-examination. Then he looked up and answered, gravely:

'I think you are right. I think it quite likely I should. Yes, Britomarte, if I had lived in those dark ages, and you had been the lady of the castle, that I loved and could not win, I think—indeed I know—I should have scaled your castle and carried you off to my own; but then I know I should have won your love, and made you my wife, and cherished you as the dearest object of my life, and been faithful to you unto death!' he added, solemnly.

'Don't make the matter personal to me!' exclaimed the young reformer, proudly. "I could no more have been that woman to have caressed the hand of my conqueror. Nor could the middle ages have brought me forth. I am the child of the nineteenth century—of the twentieth I sometimes think, when I see how dark with ignorance, injustice, and oppression this boasted nineteenth century is. So never fancy me living in the middle ages and acting the part of a whipped spaniel. Leave me out of the story.'

'Yes, yes, certainly,' said Justin, smiling 'if you will leave me out of it; not else. If you put me down into the middle ages, though it is only in imagination, I will take you down with me; for I cannot, or rather will not, go anywhere without you.'

'Or suffer me to go anywhere without you, it seems,' said Britomarte, bitterly.

'No,' answered Justin, gravely; 'it is my intention to be with you.'

'So this, then, is the "distant duty" you were to go upon when you were ordained and went from home,' said Miss Conyers, satirically.

'Yes.'

'And Emilie never explained. It was not like her to be so reserved with me.'

'My sister was in honour bound to keep my secret.'

'But why should your action in this matter have been kept a secret? It seems to me that honourable actions need never be kept so.'

'That is a mistake. Sometimes they must. My intended voyage was kept a secret because I thought, if you discovered that I was to be your fellow-voyager, you would never embark on this enterprise.'

'That I never should have done.'

'And your valuable services would have been lost to the mission,' said Justin, with a slight smile.

Her eyes flashed fire. She came down upon him with a trenchant scorn in her next words.

'We sailed on Tuesday. This is Saturday, the fifth day out, and we have not seen anything of you until this morning. Pray, do you consider it conduct worthy of a gentleman to come secretly upon the ship, and remain in hiding like a fugitive for four or five days?'

'I beg your pardon,' said Justin, good-humouredly, 'but you are wrong in your premises. I did not come secretly on the ship. I engaged myself as clerk to the captain, who is an old friend of our family. The first day, it is true, I kept out of your sight, lest, if you happened to see me, you might take flight and go back on the pilot-boat.'

'I verily believe that I should have done so.'

'Certainly you would; and as I said before, your valuable services would have been lost to the mission. To obviate which misfortune I kept out of your sight and in the captain's office, where I occupied myself in arranging his books and papers until the pilot went back. After which, as it was impossible you should swim back to the main land, I did not mind showing myself at the table. But unfortunately you were sea-sick, and I could not see you until this morning.'

'But was it right, was it manly, was it honourable, to follow me in this manner?' scornfully questioned the man-hater.

'Yes, Miss Conyers, it was all that,' said Justin, gravely. 'I told you in the beginning that I loved you with my whole heart and soul; for time and for eternity; that I should make it the first object of my life to win you, letting wait all other business that might be incompatible with the pursuit of that object. I do not say I could not live without you, for I have a sound, strong constitution, and could endure a great deal of suffering for a great length of time. But I do say that I do not choose to live without you. So much do I love you, so hopeful I am of winning you.'

'You are very arrogant and presumptuous to say so!' flashed the man-hater, savagely.

'No; there again you mistake. My love for you is as far from presumption as it is from hopelessness. I saw from the first how your nature is divided against itself—how your intellect has armed itself in defence of what you term woman's rights, while your heart has been filled with woman's tenderest love—and my business is to make you at one with yourself; to reconcile the quarrel between your heart and your head,' said Justin, firmly.

'And you say that this is not presumption!' blazed the young champion.

'I repeat, it is as far from despair,' said Justin, smiling, and adding: 'Far down in the depths of your whole nature—for it is a noble nature, even in its wildest eccentricities—you have a loving and lovely womanhood, but it is imprisoned, chained and guarded by two dragons called pride and prejudice. Like the sleeping beauty in the fairy tale, this sweet womanhood only waits to be awakened and delivered. And I am the destined knight who is to overcome the dragons and deliver the captive beauty.'

'I suspected that you were a little mad, and now I know it!' said Britomarte, with a curling lip, as she arose with the intention of walking away.

But, ever so tenderly and reverentially, Justin laid his hand on her shoulder, and looked with his grave eyes in her face, and with a thrill, strangely mingled, of impotent defiance and involuntary delight, she subsided into her place, and covered her eyes with her hand.

Justin dropped his hand and continued, but with much more emotion than he had hitherto betrayed:

'My dearest! my dearest! this interview of ours has been conducted—on your part with an aspect of defiance at variance with the true womanliness of your nature, and on mine with a bantering tone that belies the deep earnestness of my heart! for I love you, Britomarte Conyers! I love you more than words can express! For this love I have left all other hopes, purposes, ambitions, to follow you, to be with you, to watch over you, to share your fate! I think that I am unworthy of you; I hope that I am not indifferent to you, and I believe that I can bless your life, as I know that you can bless mine. Look on me! Speak to me, my beloved!'

But she kept her eyes fixed upon the deck, and beat a nervous tattoo with her foot. She was thrilled through every fibre of her sensitive frame, and dared not trust herself to raise her eyes or open her lips.

'You can not? Then I will not annoy you, love! Only to be with you here is a happiness so great, that I should be content with that alone! Yes, to be with you, as I must be every day and all day long for the next five, six, or seven months; and then if God gives us a prosperous voyage, to land with you on that distant shore and live near you in that unknown country, will be a joy unspeakable!'

'We may never reach that shore! The voyage is a dangerous as well as a tedious one,' said Britomarte, in a low, slow, dreamy tone, as if she had spoken rather to herself than to him.

'It is. We may never reach Farther India. Disasters at sea are common enough, and shipwreck is always possible! So let Heaven's will be done! Neither you nor I fear pain or death. We fear nothing but separation.'

'Speak for yourself, Mr. Rosenthal,' said Britomarte, in a low, stern tone.

'Very well! I shall speak only for myself that which I hope is true, or may become true, of both of us. I shrink from nothing but a separation from you. The suffering, danger, death I cannot save you from, I will gladly share with you! Oh! well! our fates are cast in the same lot! that is my present satisfaction. Britomarte! for the rest I can wait! I have several months before me,' he concluded, with a smile. And he arose and stood up, for, sauntering towards them came Mr. Ely, supporting the feeble steps of his young wife. A few paces behind them came Mr. and Mrs. Breton.

It appeared that the two missionaries had met Mr. Rosenthal that morning at the breakfast table. But their wives had never seen him. So an introduction followed their appearance.

While it was going on, Miss Conyers slipped away, went down into the cabin and took refuge in her state-room, where she bolted herself in, threw off her wrappings, and sat down on the sofa to collect her faculties and compose her perturbed mind.

Was she glad or sorry to discover Justin Rosenthal on the ship? and to know that he must be her daily, constant, intimate companion in that ship for half a year or so?

She was glad! She could not pretend to deny it to herself. She was glad. Here, in the solitude of her state-room, she fully admitted the fact.

Yes, indeed, since he not of her own had encouraged him to follow her; since she was in no way responsible for his coming; since her future freedom could be in no way compromised by his presence, she was glad, oh, Heaven, how deeply, how intensely glad that he was here! that she should rise every morning with the certainty of having his company all day long! that with eye and ear she should drink in daily the deep joy of his smile and his voice, and all this without any volition of her own, and therefore without any bond upon her life.

For she was fully resolved that, come what might, she would never marry him, and never give him the slightest reason to hope that she would! never! never! never! She would be a man-hater and a woman's champion forever and forever, amen!

So resolving, the marriage renouncer took her needle-work and walked out into the cabin.

Judith was there, very busy, rubbing and polishing all the metal-work about the place.

'Which being Saturday, ma'am, we allers brighten up a bit,' said Judith; 'but I hope I don't mislest you ma'am.'

'No, not at all. Go on with your duties, and don't mind me,' said Miss Conyers, seating herself in one of the easy chairs, and beginning her needle-work.

Then, by way of keeping her thoughts from dwelling too much upon the man whom she was resolved never to marry, she began to try to take an interest in Judith's affairs, and to that end she entered into conversation with her.

'You must be very lonesome, I am afraid, Judith,' she said.

'Thank you kindly, ma'am, for thinking about the likes iv me at all. And sure it's lonesome enough I should be, if it wa'n't for Biddy Mullony, the crayther.'

'Biddy Mullony?' repeat d Miss Conyers.

'Yes, ma'am; sure Mike Mullony, the carpenter's mate's wife—bad luck to him for an intoxified brute beste as he is—saving your presence, ma'am. Sure father and I mane with Biddy Mullony and Mike.'

'Why, I had no idea there were so many women on the ship.'

'No more there ain't, ma'am, forbye it's Biddy Mullony and meself. And it's a burning pity she's here, the crayther, for sure when the drink's in him rael he gives her no peace of life.'

'Do you mean to say that the wretch gets drunk and abuses his wife?' exclaimed the

man-hater, waking up to the exercise of her vocation.

'Sure I mane nothing else, at all, begging your pardon, ma'am.'

'The same story, always the same, everywhere the same! Oh, land and sea the same old story of man's oppression and woman's endurance. Why does the captain allow such outrages on his ship?' sharply demanded the young reformer.

'Sure, ma'am, it's none of the captain's business to be meddling and making twixt man and wife.'

'And the same excuse for non-interference, always the same, everywhere the same! Oh, land and sea the same—nobody's business. Why, it is everybody's business. It is your business, and it is my business,' said woman's champion, indignantly.

'I'm sure then, ma'am, I'm often fit to pitch Mike into the say itself. But sure if I was so much as to open my mouth to interfere in their fights, Mike would make two heads of me; and if he didn't, Biddy would herself.'

'Poor crushed worms that have not even the worm's spunk to turn,' sighed woman's young champion, communing with herself. 'I marry,—I become the slave, the goods and chattels of any man, to be used and abused according to his lordly will. It is not very likely, Mr. Justin Rosenthal. It is not to be expected that you will break your heart for the love of me or of any other woman; but if you do I shall not care; indeed I shall be glad. You will be one sin-offering, at least, laid upon the altar of outraged womankind!'

In the full tide of her indignant thought, she was gently interrupted by the quiet entrance of her two female companions.

'It was so rough on deck, we had to come below again, dear,' said Mrs. Ely, as she passed into her state-room to lay off her wrappings.

The three ladies spent the remainder of the forenoon in their cabin, occupying themselves with needle-work.

Britomarte saw no more of Justin Rosenthal that day, except at dinner and a supper, where, the conversation being general, there was not the slightest opportunity afforded for even the briefest private conference.

After supper Mr. Rosenthal retired to his berth in the captain's office, and Mr. Ely went with him.

Mr. Breton and the three ladies went down into the cabin.

Britomarte and her companions resumed their monotonous needle-work.

Mr. Breton read to them from Travels in India. But the book proved a heavy one and was soon laid aside. Then he talked to them a little. But Brother Breton was not brilliant in conversation. Finally he hummed a little. But that was not found to be very entertaining.

The evening threatened to be a very dull one, until Mrs. Breton, looked up, said, cunningly:

'Do sing us one of your inspiring hymns, dear Miss Conyers. They always raise our spirits. And we have not heard one since that first evening.'

'I am not equal to singing just now. But I will try to amuse you with some readings from the poets, if that will do as well,' said Britomarte, who was not one of those falsely delicate people who hide their light under a bushel. She always lighted her candle and placed it on a candlestick that it might give light to all that were in the house. In other words, she was quite conscious of her powers of entertaining, and always willing to exert those powers for the benefit of her friends.

'Give us some readings from the poets? Will you? Oh, will you, indeed? We shall like that better than anything. It will be a change. Will it not, Martha?' said Mrs. Ely, appealing to Mrs. Breton.

'Yes, indeed. What poets have you, dear Miss Conyers?' said Mrs. Breton.

'A few in my state-room and a great many in my head. I think that I may be able to produce your favourite. What will you have?'

'Have you got Lalla Rookh?' inquired Mrs. Ely.

'Yes, in my state-room,' said Miss Conyers. And she immediately went and brought it out.

'Which portion of Lalla Rookh shall I read?' she asked, as she seated herself at the table and opened the volume.

'Oh, the Fire-Worshippers!' exclaimed Mrs. Ely.

'Oh, yes! The Fire-Worshippers. That is so beautiful,' added Mrs. Breton warmly.

'Very well. The Fire-Worshippers it is,' agreed Miss Conyers, who never thought it necessary to consult the taste of the one 'natural enemy' who was present.

And somewhat to her own secret disgust, the man-hater began to read that charming Persian love story that will never cease to fascinate the imagination of the young.

She read with effect even that which was a little repugnant to her principles. But soon the spell of the poet was felt by the woman. She warmed to his subject; she lost herself in his story. The man-hater merged into the artist-reader. She read with impassioned eloquence. She carried

her hearers away with her on the wings of fancy. They were no longer in the little cabin of a sailing-ship, on the broad Atlantic Ocean. They were in the rose-gardens of Persia, inhaling the perfume of a thousand tropical flowers, listening to the notes of the bulbul, watching with Hinda and her lover.

And Oh, with what a gush of tenderness, passion, pathos, and devotion she read those words:

'I only ask to breathe the air,
The blessed air that's breathed by thee,
And whether on its wings it bear
Healing, or death, 'tis sweet to me!'

As she finished these last lines, she raised her eyes and met those of Justin Rosenthal, fixed on her in admiration, in longing, in worship. She saw that he had appropriated every word of those impassioned lines and was applying them to herself.

How long he had been there listening to her she could not tell. He had probably come down into the cabin at the invitation of Mr. Ely, who was standing by him.

However that might be, Miss Conyers immediately closed her book.

'Oh dear, pray do not let us interrupt the reading,' said innocent Brother Ely.

'You have not interrupted it. I had finished,' replied Miss Conyers.

'Oh, no! pray, pray, go on! don't break off just there,' pleaded Mrs. Ely.

'You must please to excuse me. Good-night,' said Miss Conyers, rising and curtseying gracefully before she withdrew to her state-room.

'What a brilliant woman she is! Rosenthal, why don't you marry her and join our religion?' inquired Mr. Ely.

'Because, to all Christian marriages the consent of the bride is considered to be an indispensable preliminary,' smiled Justin Rosenthal.

Said Mr. Ely—'Then win it.'

CHAPTER XII.

A LOVER'S BOUNDLESS FAITH AND HOPE.

As earth pours freely to the sea
Its falling streams of wealth untold,
So flows my constant love to thee,
Glad that its very sands are gold.

Far lies spring on some distant dawn,
My triumph comes more sweet than late,
When all these early mists withdrawn,
They soul shall know me—I can wait.

—*Anon.*

The next day was Sunday—their first Sabbath at sea. There was divine worship in the dining saloon; and all the passengers, and as many of the officers and men as could be spared from the necessary duty of working the ship, attended in their best clothes. Brother Ely conducted the devotions, and Brother Breton preached the sermon from the appropriate text—

'They that go down into the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep.'

After the morning service came the early dinner, and after that the pleasant promenade on deck. The weather was very fine, and all our little party of missionaries had by this time found their sea-limbs, and even the young women could walk the rolling deck almost as well as the 'old salts.' The day was warm and bright for October, and the ship was running freely before a fair wind. Our young voyagers enjoyed the bright sky, the blue sea, and the fresh air, much too keenly to think of going down below for a good while. The newly married couples paired off in good, old-fashioned Darby and Joan style, each little wife leaning on the arm of her husband.

Miss Conyers walked aft, and sat down on an armchest near the bulwarks, and watched the blue waves as they gave chase, leaping playfully, and breaking the foam against the sides of the great ship.

Justin Rosenthal saw her where she sat, and walked towards her.

She knew well he was coming, but gave no sign of recognition.

A slight smile played over his earnest face as he paused before her, watching her for a moment before he spoke. He understood Britomarte thoroughly, yet he continued to study her, as though she were quite a new and unknown volume to him. His smile seemed to say—'I know very well that you are acting a part at variance with your own true, womanly nature;' but not then would he give utterance to that thought.

Bowing gravely, he inquired—

'Miss Conyers, will you walk?'

'No, thank you,' she answered, speaking coldly, without looking at him, yet trembling visibly, as she always did when he addressed her.

'Then will you talk?' he inquired, seating himself on another chest beside her.

Now she did look up, her splendid dark grey eyes really blazing with resentment for an instant, and then veiled beneath their long, dark lashes, as she turned them away.

That flashing and averted glance said, as plainly as words could have spoken, 'I have a great mind to get up and go away. Only

that to do so would be to attach too much importance to your intrusion.'

And so she sat still, and Justin exerted himself to interest her, and she soon fell under the influence of the master mind that knew so well how to hold her spell-bound. He broached no subject personal to himself or to her, but he talked of those social reforms that were occupying the minds of all philanthropists alike in the old world and the new—the abolition of slavery, the emancipation of women, division of labour, etc.

And the young reformer listened with the deepest interest, for he dealt with these subjects as only a strong intellect and right good heart can deal with them.

Ah! he knew how to rivet her attention. The matter of his conversation profoundly interested her, while his manner soothed and re-assured her.

And so, when, by and by, he broke off from his didactic discourse, and suddenly said—

'But indeed you should avail yourself of this fine weather to take some exercise. It may not last, you know. In a few days, or hours even, we may have a change, when you will be confined to the cabin. Let me persuade you to walk. Take my arm.'

Britomarte almost unconsciously arose, and allowed him to draw her hand through his arm, and lead her in the wake of Mr. and Mrs. Ely, and Mr. and Mrs. Breton, who were still promenading.

'Well, go on, if you please, Mr Rosenthal, with that you were saying,' said Britomarte, looking up eagerly into his face, and feeling so deeply interested in the subject of their discourse as scarcely to know that they had left their seats, and were promenading the deck arm in arm!

'I was saying—yes, I was saying—What was it I was saying, now?' pondered Justin, in droll perplexity; for, oh! ah! and alas! and all the interjections at the end of them, Justin had forgotten what he had been saying, though it had interested Britomarte so deeply. In his delight at having succeeded in fixing her attention, in getting her up to walk, in feeling her hand rest composedly upon his arm, he had ungratefully forgotten the very means by which he had achieved his triumph.

To tell the truth, Justin did not care a pin for this particular subject that he had just been discussing with Britomarte. But I am afraid, I am really afraid, that the Lutheran minister's talented son would have lent himself to the discussion of Mormonism, Chartism, Bloomerism, Fourierism, or any other or all other isms, for the sake of conversing with the beautiful young creature.

'I was saying—I was saying—Bless me, what was it? It has quite slipped my memory,' said Justin, in laughing confusion.

'You were saying that the Female Medical College—'

'Ah, yes—that it will be a success!' exclaimed Justin, glad to get the cue, and to throw in a word of encouragement for an enterprise that he knew was very dear to Britomarte's heart.

'Will be a success! It must, in spite of all the opposition, persecution, ridicule, insult, that is heaped upon the devoted heads of those few brave young women who are the pioneers of our sex into that field of labour. It must be a success!' exclaimed Britomarte, fervently.

And so it they went with all their hearts and heads.

As for Britomarte, she was now all the champion! too deeply interested in the subject they were discussing to be at all interested in her lover. So forgetful was she of him, and of his love-making, that in the earnestness of her argument, she steadily gazed up into his eyes, waiting for response, and involuntarily pressed his arm to quicken his perceptions, which process only threw all his thoughts into confusion, delightful confusion, however, which he would not have exchanged for the most intellectual order.

As for Justin, he would have talked Buddhism, Paganism, Mahommedanism, or as I said before, any or every other ism, with zest, for the sake of having her close to his side, of feeling her arm vibrate upon his own, of watching her eye a burn and flash, or melt and become suffused with tears, of seeing her cheeks flush and pale, and her bosom heave and fall, with the fire, the fervour, the earnestness of her young, ardent, enthusiastic soul. But though himself moved and shaken by the love she had inspired, the passion she had aroused, he was wise enough and strong enough to control his feelings and guard his face; to keep on the safe plane of intellectual discussion, and avoid the forbidden ground of love.

Ah, but he felicitated himself upon the discovery that he had just made—namely, that so long as he avoided the dangerous subject of love in the presence of the manhater, and discoursed of reforms to the young reformer, he might walk and talk with Britomarte Conyers as often and as long as he wished to do so.

On this occasion they walked and talked while the time slipped unheeded away, and the sun descended towards his splendid

setting. They walked and talked until Mr. and Mrs. Ely grew tired and went below, followed by Mr. and Mrs. Breton, who remarked to each other, as they went down into the cabin:

'That will be a match yet, see if it don't.'

'Yes,' said Mrs. Breton, 'and they might be married on shipboard here, as well as any other place. How fortunate there are two clergymen at hand.'

'Very! I hope they will bring matters to a crisis soon, and then we shall have another young couple in the cabin,' said Mr. Breton.

'Which will make everything so much more sociable and pleasant,' said Mrs. Ely.

'But for all that I do not think Miss Conyers is disposed to marry,' observed Mr. Ely, remembering his own rebuff, but wisely refraining from mentioning it.

'Disposed to marry, my dear? Why, of course not. What young lady is ever disposed to marry? But a sense of duty might induce her to consent. One who, like her, is called to the work of the ministry among the heathen, certainly requires a legal protector, just as Brother Rosenthal, if he joins our mission, will require a help-meet. I think the whole affair is quite providential,' said Mrs. Ely.

And so, gathered around their cabin table the little party of missionaries discussed the very problematical question of a marriage between Jessie Rosenthal and Britomarte Conyers.

And meanwhile the subjects of their conversation, unconscious of the honour that was done them, walked and talked on the deck until the sun went down beneath the western wave in golden glory, and the moon arose in the east in silver splendour. They walked and talked until the gathering shades of night warned them to go below.

Just as they were about to part at the head of the cabin stairs, Justin so far forgot the reticence he had prescribed for himself as to whisper:

'It has been a very delightful afternoon. I hope that you have enjoyed it equally with myself.'

The moment he had spoken these words he regretted them, but it was too late. Her whole manner changed; its warmth and abandon were gone; she froze in an instant. She answered, coldly and candidly:

'It has been a pleasant afternoon. I like to converse with you the subjects that lie so near my conscience, and I liked your views. But I tell you frankly, Mr. Rosenthal, that I feel I may have done wrong in monopolizing so much of your conversation this afternoon, remembering what passed between us yesterday,' she added, referring, of course, to Justin's proposal and her own rejection.

'Then do not remember it, Miss Conyers. Let it be forgotten. Surely you and I, thrown together on this ship, to be daily companions for many months to come—surely I may we may meet as ordinary acquaintances, and discuss, as intelligent human beings, the great questions affecting human destiny. Surely we may do this without any improper intrusion on my part, or any departure from fixed principles on yours, may we not?' said Justin, earnestly.

'Yes, certainly, we may do so with mutual advantage. Only Mr. Rosenthal I want you to understand that I am not inconsistent; that what I said yesterday I mean to day; and when we meet and talk, it must be as ordinary acquaintances, intelligent companions, and no more. You may think there is a great deal of vanity and egotism in what I say; but if you think my position clearly understood. To omit to do so would be very wrong.'

'You are very clearly understood, Miss Conyers,' said Justin with a smile, and if in his deeper knowledge of human nature, and of her nature, his words would admit of a double meaning, he must be pardoned for using them, for in fact he had a very 'aggravating' lady love to deal with.

She went down into the cabin.

He walked forward to inhale a little longer the exhilarating air of the upper deck, and also to enjoy his own thoughts.

'Very well, my queen,' he smiled to himself, 'I will keep my word with you. Indeed, I have a great mind to bind my soul by a vow that I will never again ask you to be my wife; but will throw the responsibility of the proposal upon you.'

And in all this there was not the least degree of a young man's vanity, but the largest faith, the brightest hope, and the fondest love for Britomarte.

The tea-bell aroused him from his reverie, and he went back to the head of the cabin stairs and waited for his companions.

Mr. and Mrs. Breton and Mr. and Mrs. Ely came up and walked in pairs to the dining saloon.

When Britomarte appeared alone, Justin, without even so much said as 'By your leave,' silently, as a matter of course, drew

her hand within his arm and led her to the tea-table.

After tea they had an evening service, when Brother Breton led the prayers and gave out the hymns, and Brother Ely read the scriptures and preached the sermon.

And thus closed their first Sabbath at sea.

Monday, and many days after Monday, were passed in this way. First breakfast in the dining saloon, where the passengers always met the captain and some of his officers, where the whole company passed an hour around the table in eating, drinking, and conversing gaily. Next, if the weather was fine, came the passengers' promenade on deck, where, wrapped in their warmest shawls, they would walk for an hour or two.

Sometimes Britomarte and Justin would walk and talk together as on that Sunday afternoon; but more frequently they would join the Bretons and the Elys.

After the promenade the young women would go down in the cabin and engage in needle-work until dinner time, when again there was a cheerful re-union around the dinner table. In the afternoon, if the weather was warm enough they brought their needle-work and books on deck, and the ladies sewed while the gentlemen, or one of them, read aloud. Then came a prolonged sitting over the tea-table. Their evenings were spent in the cabin, the ladies sewing, knitting, crocheting, and one of the gentlemen reading aloud to the others; mostly from books of travels in India, or histories of missions founded there, or biographies of missionaries who lived, laboured and died there.

Occasionally the entertainment was varied by Readings from the Poets, given by Britomarte, or little concerts, of which Miss Conyers was the prime donna. Brother Ely possessed a flute, upon which he really practised with much less excruciating torture to the ears of listening victims than young amateurs usually succeed in inflicting. But the flute sounded best on those few evenings when the mild air permitted them to hear it by moonlight or starlight on deck.

Of these little evening parties in the cabin, Justin Rosenthal always formed one. He had no berth in their cabin, and therefore no business there without a special invitation; but either Brother Ely or Brother Breton took great care that this special invitation should never be wanting. If either, or both of them, had once forgotten to give it, they would have heard of the negligence from Sister one or the other.

In truth, these young people were unconsciously anxious to bring the other two young creatures together. They, the married ones, being all well-disposed people, were reasonably happy in their married state, and benevolently desirous of making the single ones equally so. It is very true, their marriage had originated in expediency, or, as they called it, duty. The two missionaries had been provided with wives as they had been served with outfits—by the care of the Mission Board. I cannot even take it upon myself to say, that the young people had even exchanged *carte-de-visite* before they met to marry. They had accepted each other upon the representation of mutual friends. And they had not repented having done so. These marriages were turning out happily. And this result rather favours Dr. Johnson's idea, that if all the marriages in the world were arranged arbitrarily by the Lord Chancellor between persons who had never seen each other, the end would be just as prosperous as it is now, when all people have freedom of choice.

Our missionaries, then, were so well satisfied with their own married states, that they were amiably desirous of making Justin and Britomarte partakers of the blessings of matrimony. And they did all they could, in a quiet way, to further that object.

Certainly, they were the most innocent and obvious match makers in the world. Jus in saw the drift of all their manœuvres, and he was somewhat disturbed lest Britomarte should also see it, and take alarm, and hold him off at a greater distance than ever she had done before. But his uneasiness was without good grounds. Britomarte had never lived in an atmosphere of match-making, and knew nothing about the process by which two people are guided, like two sheep, towards each other, until almost unawares they find themselves united 'for better, for worse,' and for life.

But one unlucky day, as the spirit of mischief would have it, Mrs. Breton had the ill-fortune to speak to Miss Conyers on the subject of the desired marriage.

It was in the middle of the day when the two young women were alone—sitting at needle-work around their cabin-table.

'It is very monotonous, this long sea voyage,' said Mrs. Breton, yawning. 'I wish we had some little variety. Britomarte, when is that wedding to come off? How, that would be something to refer to.'

'Did you speak to me, Martha?' said

Miss Conyers, with some difficulty waking up from a deep, dream-like reverie.

'Yes; I inquired when the wedding is to come off.'

'What wedding, my dear?'

'Yours, to be sure, and Mr. Justin Rosenthal's.'

The brow of the man-hater reddened.

'There is no question of a wedding between Mr. Rosenthal and myself,' she answered, coldly.

'Oh! isn't there though? Well, there will be, or there ought to be; for it is easy to see that you were made for each other, and that he is devoted to you. To be sure there is no such hurry with you two as there was with us two, who, the Board thought, ought to marry before starting. You met here, on the ship, and you have a long voyage before you. Still, I should think that you would both be happier, once you were married. We should be pleased to see you so, I know,' rattled on poor little Mrs. Breton, without looking up from her work, and consequently without seeing how deeply she had offended the man-hater.

Yet, as I said before, Miss Conyers was incapable of resenting any offence from one of her own sex; her pity and sympathy with them all was too real and deep. She reserved all her outspoken indignation for the 'natural enemy.'

Now she governed the anger that swelled her bosom, and which was really anger against the idea presented rather than against the well-meaning little woman who presented it, and she answered, gravely and gently:

'There is no possibility of a marriage, either now or ever, between Mr. Rosenthal and myself. I am very sorry that our occasional companionship should have led you into such an error as to suppose that there could be.'

'But why not? It would be such a suitable match,' persisted poor Martha Breton, all unconscious how far she was taxing the patience of the forbearing man-hater.

'Because for one reason—I will never marry any man so long as the present laws of marriage prevail. Moreover, so long as these laws prevail I will use all the influence I possess to prevent other women from marrying,' said woman's young champion, firmly.

'But, Britomarte, you shock me beyond measure! Prevent women from marrying! prevent women from fulfilling the very first law of God given to man! Why, the very first Divine institution on earth was that of marriage. And the very first command given to man was to increase and multiply and replenish the earth. Why, what are you thinking of? You—a Christian missionary to the heathen?' exclaimed Mrs. Breton, in unbounded astonishment, and some righteous indignation.

'I am thinking,' replied the marriage renouncer, calmly and patiently,—'I am thinking that this law of marriage and multiplication was given to man before sin brought death and all our woes into the world, and very long before the iniquitous laws enacted by man made marriage for women a state of slavery, and worse than slavery, a state of nonentity.'

'Britomarte, what do you mean? Slavery! nonentity! Is a young girl less of a free and responsible human being when she becomes by marriage a beloved wife and an honoured mother?'

'Yes, very much less so. A free maiden, by marriage, becomes in one sense a slave, since she lapses into the personal property of her husband; and in another sense she becomes a nonentity, since she can own nothing in her own name, and do nothing legally on her own responsibility.'

'Ah, Britomarte! how can you say such dreadful things? I am sure I do not feel as if I had lowered myself at all in marrying Brother Breton; but raised myself in every way indeed. I was a poor lonely orphan girl, and now I am a cherished wife.'

'But you were free and now you are bound. You were your own mistress and now you have a master,' murmured the man-hater, as if musing within herself rather than speaking to her companion.

'A master! Oh, Britomarte! if you knew how little of a master he is! how much he thinks of me! how good he is to me, bless him. I hope I shall make him a good wife. I am sure I shall never be sorry for marrying Brother Breton.'

'My dear,' said Miss Conyers, tenderly, 'if you are satisfied, I am pleased; so do not let us pursue this subject. I did not willingly enter upon it, for in your case it is too late, and therefore useless to discuss the question of a woman's position in marriage.'

'Yes; but I must discuss it now. You have stirred me up, you know, and I wish to be informed why you think I am a slave, or a piece of property, or a nonentity, because I am a wife,' persisted Martha Breton.

'Because you actually are so, in the law, whether you are or not conscious of the fact. You belong to your husband as absolutely as the captain's dog belongs to him. I am sorry you insist on my saying those cruel things—cruel because useless in your case,' said Miss Conyers gently.

'But they are not cruel. I like the idea of belonging to my husband and having him to love me and take care of me. Ah! if you only knew how desolate I felt when I belonged to no one! But then I am not intellectual like you are, Britomarte. I am only a poor little thing. And I think it was very kind of Brother Breton to take me on any terms,' said the [illegible] wife.

'Well, my dear, as I [illegible] if you are happy, I am satisfied [illegible] happiness, without wishing to [illegible] quality. Let us drop the subject,' said [illegible] Conyers, wearily, for little Mrs. Breton's manner of thinking and speaking on the great subject of woman's rights fatigued and discouraged woman's earnest companion.

'Oh no, please? You said just now that a wife could own no property in her own name and do no legal act on her own responsibility.'

'Yes; I said so; but I do not wish to rub the facts into you! It would be a cruel as it is useless to do so, as I remarked before.'

'But you see it doesn't affect us—poor us! we have no property at all, except the clothes we wear,' laughed Mrs. Breton.

'Well, since you will hear it, the very clothes on your back do not lawfully belong to you, but to your husband. The very brooch on your breast, the very ring on your finger, the very needle in your hand itself is not yours, but his, as is your whole person and all you once possessed, but possess no longer. In the marriage ceremony the man is made to say to his bride—"With all my worldly goods I thee endow," and he forswears himself, for he does exactly the opposite thing to what he says. He should say, if he spoke the truth—"Of thee and all thy worldly goods I take possession." But then men seldom deem it necessary to be upon their truth or honour in any of their relations with women, their natural serfs, as they regard us.'

'Oh, Britomarte! how severe, how unjust even, you are. If you only knew Brother Breton, you would think better of all men. I could tell you such things of him. Why sooner than take the smallest article from me, he would give me all he possesses; he would indeed, bless him. He wants to be giving me all the time; but he has so little to give, poor fellow. Only the other day, when the wind blew so hard on deck and he couldn't get me to go down stairs—notwithstanding that, he is my master and I am bound to obey him, as you say——'

—'Yes, in the law he is your master, and you are bound to obey him. The fact is undeniable,' interrupted the man-hater.

'Well, notwithstanding that fact, he could not get me to go down out of the wind, because I didn't o coat to go. And so the dear fellow, bless him, took the coat from his own shoulders and wrapped me up in it, and stood shivering and shaking with the cold, to keep me from being over so little chilled. Well, I couldn't bear that, so in two minutes I went down below and restored him his coat. And from all I see I do believe that Brother Ely would do as much for Sister Ely as Brother Breton does for me. Oh, Britomarte, I cannot bear to have you so unjust. But once you are married, you will get over all these ideas. Since I have been married I have been thinking that only wives can know how good, and tender, and devoted, men really are——'

—'Or how wicked, brutal and tyrannical they can be! Bah!' said the man-hater, rising in disgust; but then quickly repressing her indignation, she added gently—"My dear good little creature, you have fallen into the hands of a kind master, there are many such among the owners of white slaves. That is all that can be said of your lot. If you are happy in it, Heaven keep you so. Only do not plan out any such destiny for me. I have not humility enough to accept it.'

[illegible] this, the marriage-renouncer went into [illegible] state-room and shut the door.

CHAPTER XIII.

MISADVENTURE OF THE MAN HATER.

The times are out of joint! Oh cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set them right!
—*Shakespeare.*

Mrs. Ely came out of her room, followed by Judith, who had been in there holding hanks of Berlin wool, for that lady to wind.

Mrs. Ely sat down to the table and took up the half-knit shawl that she had in progress, and joined the end of the new ball of wool upon it and resumed the work.

Judith went about the cabin, dusting and polishing according to her custom of busy idleness, for in truth the sea-wind had long since blown away every vestige of dust from the ship, and all the metals were as bright as mirrors.

'I do believe that Britomarte is a man-hater,' said Mrs. Breton to her friend.

'A man-hater?' echoed Mrs. Ely, looking up from her knitting.

'Yes, a man-hater,' repeated Mrs. Breton.

'Glory to Moses, a man-hater! Lord be-

tune us and harm—a man-ater!' gasped Judith, dropping her jaws and opening her eyes, and staring at the speaker, while she suspended her work to listen. "Sure do they mane that she ates men? And will that be the raison she is going to the Cannibal Islands, where that same is lawful diet, even in lent? Hooly S'in! Pater, but one lives and larns in this world. We had a luny on board ones, but she wasn't a man-ater sure!' muttered Judith, as she set herself to hear some horrid mystery connected with the name of Miss Biddy Martin.

For 'Biddy Martin' was Judith's rendering of the outlandish name, Britomarte.

'What an idea! Why do you think Britomarte a man-hater? I cannot fancy that pure, tender, noble-creature hating anything. Why do you think she is a man-hater?' inquired Mary Ely.

But Martha Breton caught sight of Judith's open mouth and distended eyes, and with a glance over her shoulder, murmured low:

'I will tell you some other time, when we are alone.' And she immediately changed the conversation.

As Judith had not heard Mrs. Breton's low-toned words, she took no offence, but resumed her dusting and polishing, keeping her ears open meanwhile to catch up any word that might throw light upon that ghastly suspicion of man-eating.

'And where does she get the men to ate, itse?' pondered Judith. 'Sure we don't aven ate the bastes when they die a natrul death! And sure she'll never kill her men as well as ate them? Bedad and I'll never belave a word of it at all! It's jist a bit iv slandher entirely. The likes iv her is too good a crayture to ate men, forby she was crazy; and she's too sensible entirely to be crazy.'

Judith's meditations were interrupted by the sound of voices again, and she stopped to listen.

'Isn't it dreadfully inconvenient this going to sea for so long a voyage—a voyage of so many months?' Mrs. Breton was saying. 'I brought three dozen changes of under-clothing with me, and I try to make them hold out as long as they will; but I can't wear a suit more than a week, and I am really sometimes afraid they will not last me until the end of the voyage; and besides, the accumulation of soiled clothing in our cabin is so very unpleasant and unwholesome. What ever shall we do, Mary?'

'I don't know, I am sure. We are all in the same fix. We must be as economical as possible,' replied Miss Ely.

'Sure is it the washing that's throubling yes, ma'am?' inquired Judith, good-naturedly, coming forward.

'Certainly it is, Judith! It is dreadful, not to be able to have one's clothes washed every week. In the darkest of days—and I have seen some dark ones—I have always been able to have my clothes washed; for even the poorest can do that—on shore, I mean; but here!—oh, it is horrid!' said Mrs. Breton.

'And sure, why wouldn't yes have your clothes washed here, ma'am?' said Judith.

'Because it could not be done here, I suppose.'

'And why couldn't it be done here, sure?'

'Who is to do it, and where is the water to come from? I wish to goodness it was possible to have those questions answered satisfactorily,' laughed Mrs. Breton.

But Mrs. Ely saw some ground of hope in Judith's looks and words.

'Is it barely possible for us to have some few things washed out?' she inquired of the girl.

'Sure, what should hinder yes from getting all ye want washed out?'

'But where is the water to come from? I thought every drop of fresh water on board ship was as precious as molten gold. I know that we cannot get a fresh supply until we reached the Cape Verde Islands.'

'Och, thin, who's spaking iv the fresh wather at all at all. Sure there's salt wather enough around us. Oceans iv it, if it comes to that.'

'Yes, my girl, but salt water won't wash clothes. I thought you were mistaken. And we are as far to seek as ever,' sighed Mrs. Breton.

'And what for should I be mistaken, whin I've been following the say iver since I was a child? Sure the salt wather washes clothes beautiful. We've an illigent salt wather soap that makes a beautiful lather, and brings the clothes as white as the say foam itself.'

'Judith, is that so? Is that really so?' inquired Mrs. Ely, speaking as eagerly, almost, as if the question was one of life and death.

'What for should I tell you a lie ma'am? Sure you can thry it and convince yourself.'

'Oh, Judith, it is such a relief to hear you say so! such good news as you would hardly believe! But who will do our washing for us?' inquired Mrs. Breton.

'What should sil meself and Misthress Mulleny not to do it? Sure me hands are dhropping off me wid the want of wurruk.

An' Misthress Mullony will be glad itself to arn a penny, and equally glad to do a kin'ness.'

'Indeed, it will be a great kindness and a well-earned penny! Oh! Judith, it is such an immense good to get one's clothes washed!' said Mrs. E.y.

'Sure, meself was wondhering why yez didn't do it afore. And threw for yez, I was even dhreading the ship fayer along with the close air!'

'Oh, Judith, it wasn't as bad as that, I hope. We put all our soiled clothing in the spare state-room, and shut the door and opened the port lights. And dear knows we would willingly have had the washing done weeks ago, if we had known that it could be done. Why didn't you tell us?" inquired Mrs Breton.

'Sure, ma'me, and it was none of my place to speak of it at all at all. Will I get the things now?

'Yes, Judith, and oh! what a relief! what a relief! Tell Mrs. ——— what is her name?'

'Misthress Mullony, ma'am, which, be the same token she's carpenter's mate's wife to my own father, who has been carpenter on this ship for sivin years come Patrick's day.'

'Very well, Judith, tell Mrs. Mullony that we will pay her liberally for her trouble,' said Mrs. Breton.

And so this great little affair was arranged, but with what final result remained to be seen.

Are these trifling details? They were no trifles, I assure you, to the young voyagers. And only those who, by drought of a long sea voyage, or any other circumstance, have been debarred from the free use of water, can understand how important it was to them.

Besides, I promised to tell my lady readers, who have never been placed in such circumstances, how women fare who go upon long sea voyages in merchant's sailing ships, which are very different things from the splendid ocean and river steamers.

So days and weeks passed. They were sailing towards the sun, and the climate was growing warmer every day.

One fine morning, when Britomarte was walking alone on the upper deck, she was startled by hearing cries of rage and distress. There were two voices—a man's angry roar and a woman's frightened sob.

These sounds produced the same effect on the man-hater and woman's champion, that the shaking of a red cloth before his eyes is said to produce on the sultan of the farmyard. It roused her peculiar mania to fury. She started upon her feet and listened—the blood rushed to her brow, her heart throbbed, her head burned, her eyes flashed! She made a dash to go down to the lower deck, from which the noise proceeded.

She met Judith Riordan full tilt at the head of the ladder.

'What is all this noise, Judith?' she inquired, sternly.

Judith, whose hands were full of fresh towels, and fresh water jugs, stopped to set down her burden for a moment and recover her breath before she answered:

'Sure, thin, ma'am, it's only Mike Mullony in his drunk.'

'What is he doing?' breathlessly inquired the champion, with her hand still upon the side-ropes to steady her steps in going down below.

'Sure it's bating her he is! He's always at it when the dhrop's into him.'

'Do you mean to say that that drunken brute is beating his wife?' blazed the man-hater.

'Sure, ma'am, you know when the dhrop's in, the sinse is out.'

'Is he beating her, I ask you?'

'Well, ma'am, I believe he's at it stopping now. I don't hear any more noise,' pleaded Judith.

'Why doesn't the captain interfere to prevent this brutal violence to a woman?'

'And so he would, sure, only it's her husband.'

'Oh, I see!—her master, who has a right to do what he likes with his own. And the captain, being a man, and a master, too, for all I know, sympathizes with the brute,' said the man-hater, bitterly.

'Sure, ma'am, the captain is a rale jintleman intirely, but he wouldn't demane himself by meddling and making betwixt a man and his wife, 'sperially in the forecastle. It's none iv his business!' argued Judith.

'I tell you, as I told you before, it is his business, and my business, and your business, and everybody's business, to prevent such brutality. And as heaven hears me, I will interfere, if nobody else does, to prevent a repetition of this outrage!'

'Better not, ma'am. Thim as meddles and makes betwixt a man and his wife allers gets the worst of it,' urged Judith.

But at this moment, a louder cry than ever from the woman below warned them that the fight was not yet over, or that it had re-commenced.

'Follow me!' cried the roused champion, as she flew down the ladder to the lower deck.

'Bedad she's crazy!' cried Judith in dismay, as she hurried after Miss Conyers.

Guided by the sound of blows as well as by the cries of the woman, Britomarte dashed forward to the forecastle, where she found the poor creature in the grasp of a drunken wretch, who held her fast with one hand, while he pummelled her with the other.

'Let that woman go, you monstrous villain! This instant, I say! You deserve death, you d mon!' cried the young champion, in an authoritative voice, standing before them; her teeth were set, her eyes concentrated and gleaming, and her face ashen pale with the deep passion of indignation that filled her young brave soul.

At her command the man dropped his hand from the woman as suddenly as if it had been struck off, and he stood amazed and ashamed in the presence of Miss Conyers.

The released woman threw her apron up to her face and began to sob.

'Shame, shame on you, man, for raising your hand against your wife! How can you ever look a woman in the face again? You should go and hide your head or hang yourself for very shame!' said Britomarte, with withering scorn.

The man's brutal ignorance was no palliation of his offence in her eyes, as it might have been in those of any one who was not a man hater. She judged that nature might have taught him better manners, if education had not done so. So she opened the vials of her wrath and poured them out upon the thick head of poor Mike as unmeasuredly as if he had been an intelligent and responsible human being.

And he stood and took it all in a very humble and hang-dog manner, venturing only to mutter in self-defence—

'Surely it was her own fault entirely, ma'am.'

'Oh, of course, it was her fault! Her fault that she is beaten and bruised within an inch of her life! It is always the woman's fault, according to men! It always was, from the time of Adam down to the time of Misther Mulloy. And it always will be, I suppose. You disgrace to humanity!—to be brutal enough to half murder your wife, and then mean enough to excuse yourself by laying the blame on your victim!'

'She provoked me to it! She did indade, ma'am,' hesitatingly urged the culprit.

'She provoked you to it, did she, indeed, my lord? And who are you, pray, to dare to be provoked to such a pitch of violence? Only absolute monarchs have such a privilege, and they have to use it with decency and discretion. And now I will tell you what, Mr. Mulloy, since that is your name, if ever you venture to raise your wicked hand against your wife again while you are in this ship, as sure as heaven sees me now, I will speak to Captain McKenzie, and have you put in irons and kept in irons until we reach some port where you can be put ashore and turned loose,' said Britomarte, firmly.

The culprit looked really abashed and mortified. He had not another word to say in his own defence. He stood with his head propped upon his chest, digging his hands in his pockets and taking them out again. He was utterly routed; when an unexpected reinforcement arrived—in whom, do you think?—in no other person than that of the injured wife!

Misthress Mulloy had been weeping behind her apron during the whole scene until now, when she suddenly dropped her apron, stuck up her arms akimbo, turned upon her astonished champion, and blazed forth as follows—

'Ye will, will ye? ye murthering divil, you! Ye'll have him pit in irons—my Mike! And who gave the likes of you lave to come betwane me and my man! You're quane o' the cabin, are ye? Well, thin, go quane it there! and kape out iv the forecastle, if you don't want a pair of black eyes!—'

'Whisht! whisht, woman! have some respect for the lady. Sure she is right entirely!' whispered the man, laying his hand in a restraining way upon his wife's shoulder.

'Whisht yerself, Mike darlint! Sure I'll give it to her! What call has she the likes iv her to come betune us, cheatning me own man foreninst me own two looking eyes! Oh, I'll tache her!—' exclaimed the virago, making a dangerous demonstration towards her unfortunate champion.

But the man's restraining hand was on her, while he spoke to Miss Conyers.

'If you please, ma'am, you'd better lave this. Sure it's no place for a lady. And when her temper's up, I wouldn't like to go bail for what she wouldn't do.'

'Poor creature!' murmured woman's young champion, gazing compassionately upon her ungrateful protege; 'she knows not what she says or does.'

'She don't, don't she? And ye'll tache her, will ye?' screamed the vixen, shaking her fists at her defender, whom she would certainly have torn to pieces had it not been for the restraining hand of the man that held her. 'You'd tache me, would you? And you'd tache Mike? Go tache the haythen in the Cannibal islands, where you're a

going to! And don't be afther thinking as you're fit to teache Christian folks their duty, which it's no brither nor a haythen you are yourself!'

But before Mistress Mullony had finished this last burst of vituperative spite, Britomarte had turned away in scalding scorn and bitterness of spirit. It was very discouraging to woman's ardent young champion, always to find that woman herself bore willingly the yoke that was laid upon her.

'Ah, thin, and why couldn't ye hold yer tongue itself?' demanded the man of his wife as soon as Miss Conyers had left them. 'Sure the lady was in the right iv it. It was a big baste I was entirely to be bating of you at all, at all, divil burn me! And the lady was right, and I'll never do it again!'

'Whisht, honey! it was the dhrink, sure, and not yerself at all, at all. And even so, what call had the likes of her to come chastising iv you forenimst me? What does a girleen know? And who is she, to be sure, Judy Riordan?' inquired the woman, turning suddenly to the stewardess, who stood there rolling her apron, and staring with dismay.

'They do call her Biddy Martin, the man-ater; but I'll niver belave it iv her, niver!' answered Judith, in a low, hushed voice of awe.

'Biddy Martin, the man-ater!' echoed Mistress Mullony, in perplexity.

'Yes, sure.'

'The man-ater?' again questioned the woman.

'Yes, I tell ye.'

'Sure does she ate men?' laughed the woman, incredulously.

'Bedad they say so! But I'll niver belave it iv her at all, at all! Sure it's a joke, or it's a slandher, one or the ither; for it can't be thrue!'

'Faix, then, I thought she'd ate the head of meself when she stood there forenimst me, looking so ferocious!' said Mike.

'A man-ater! And that will be the raison why they send her away to live in the Cannibal Islands, where they are all man-aters!' argued Mrs. Mullony, arriving at the very same conclusion that Judith Riordan had reached before her.

'But I tell you I'll niver belave it iv her, niver! I've watched her. She ates very little mate anyhow. And, sure she's not so fond of men as to want to ate them; quite the contrary, indade! It'll be only a joke, or a slandher, they have got up on her,' persisted Judith.

'Yes, that will be it!' agreed Mr. Mullony. 'And sure she's afther teaching me one good lesson. I'll niver strike Biddy again. Sure Biddy's the apple iv me eye and the core iv my heart; but I niver thought harm iv licking her when the dhrunk was in, itself, till the girleen made me see what a bhrute I was intirely. Sure I couldn't rise my eyes to her face at all, at all, whin she sthood there forninst me, like one iv the Lord's angels! Faix and I'll niver strike Biddy again, to be made to feel like a bhrute baste as I was, afore a girleen!' added Mike.

So, though woman's earnest young champion had gone away from the scene of action, chilled, embittered and discouraged, yet she had really succeeded better than she had hoped, as most reformers do, though the result of their action may not be immediately seen. She had accomplished a good work.

CHAPTER XIV.

PORT PRAYA.

There is not, night or day, a speck to stain
The azure heavens;—the blessed sun alone,
In unapproachable divinity,
Careers, rejoicing in his fields of light—
Thomson.

O'er heaven and sea, far as the ranging eye
Can sweep, a dazzling radiance reigns,
And all, from pole to pole, is undisputed
able blaze—*Southey.*

The ship was sailing toward the sun; and the weather was very beautiful; but the passengers in the cabin had been at sea more than a month, and so they were beginning to long for a sight of land, even though it were a foreign shore.

Captain M'Kenzie had said that if the wind continued tolerably favourable, by the first week in November they would make the Cape Verde Islands, where the ship was to stop for fresh water and provisions.

The wind had not been particularly favourable; and it was now the second week in November; but they were hoping to reach Port Praya in four or five days.

Our little party spent their time very much as they had done in the first weeks of their voyage—in eating, drinking and sleeping; walking, talking and inspecting; working, reading and singing.

But there was a sort of sameness in all this that was rather trying when practised in the one scene, day after day for weeks together; for you see the voyage was long and their stock of books, songs, working-material and subjects of conversation, was limited. They could not go on for ever,

reading the same volumes, singing the same airs, making up the same stock, and arguing the same points.

What could they do? They had been over every part of the ship so many times that they knew every bit of rope, canvas, iron and timber about her from stern to stern, and from keel to sky-sails, as well as they knew the interior of their houses at home.

They had made acquaintance with all the officers and crew, and knew every man by name and duty as well as they knew the pastors of their own parishes or the postmen of their own streets.

They had even become friends with the dumb animals on board, and were 'hail fellow well met' with the captain's cow, the doctor's dog, the steward's goat, the pigs, the sheep, and the poultry.

What more could they do, to kill the time that threatened else to kill them? You may rest assured that they received few visitors and paid few visits; seldom went shopping; saw few new fashions and fewer new faces. It was all very monotonous, and that is the correct truth—as monotonous as prison life, or nearly so, indeed; for prisoners do, now and then, see a new face. And, again, prisoners see the changes of the seasons on the surface of the earth; whereas, our voyagers saw no change, for with them it was sea and sky everywhere and always; they bade good morning to the same every day, and good evening to the same every night; while day and night the ship sailed on towards the sun, without ever seeming to get any nearer to any place.

This was, what is called a 'prosperous voyage'; in fact, it was insupportably heavy, and the moping passengers would almost have hailed a pirate, a sea-fight, a tempest, or a shipwreck, to break it up. They began to be mocked on the subject of land, and they longed for the sight of the Cape Verde Islands, as if they were their native shores and the bourne of all their hopes.

'I do not believe we shall ever get there,' said Martha Breton, as she and the two other young women sat together in their cabin, one afternoon, when the weather was still blowing hot to permit them to stay on deck. 'I do not believe we shall ever get anywhere! To go to bed every night and leave the same sea, and the same sky, and to get up every morning and find the same sea and the same sky, and no change and no sign of progress—oh! I tell you it is beginning to make me ill! I am beginning to doubt whether there is any reality in all this; and that I am not a miserable monomaniac, haunted with the horrible and idea of sailing forever on an endless sea. Say something to me, Britomarte!'

'Well,' said Miss Conyers, smiling, 'I think, though the sea and sky present little change, yet still there is abundant proof that we do move;—not only on the chart and in the log-book, but in the season. Recollect this is November, and we have a sun as hot and fierce as that of July and August in our native climate. We do move, my dear, believe me.'

'Oh, I suppose we do; that is to say, I take the fact on trust; I don't see it myself!' yawned Martha Breton.

'You feel it, don't you? If you don't, I do! I can hardly bear my clothes, it is so warm. And it grows warmer every day. We must be near the tropic,' said Mrs. Ely.

'We are. I heard the captain say this noon that we were in 20 degrees 7 minutes north latitude, and 23 degrees 9 minutes east longitude. And I should think, at the rate we are going now, that we are within two days' sail of the tropic of Cancer and five days' sail of the Cape Verde Islands. Come, we shall get there at last. Have courage and patience. "Time and the hours wear out the weariest day," you know,' said Britomarte.

'Ah, yes, I dare say! but there are so many weary days. And time and the hours will wear me out first, I think,' said Mrs. Breton, half laughing and half groaning.

At this moment Judith Riordan came scuffling down into the cabin, in such confusion and haste, that the three young women looked up in surprise.

Judith looked wild, frightened and breathless.

'What is the matter?' inquired Miss Conyers. 'Is the ship on fire? Have the crew mutinied? Is a pirate chasing us? Or has anything happened to flavour with the spice of variety this insipid life of ours?'

'Let me get my breath!' gasped Judith, staring at vacancy, while the young women stayed at her.

They now saw that she had got something in her apron, which she hugged up very closely to her bosom.

'What ever has got you, Judith?' inquired Martha Breton.

'Sure it's my cat they're after—the born devils!' gasped Judith. And at the same moment a fine, large grey cat bounced out of her apron and scuttled away into the spare state-room, the door of which stood conveniently open.

'Well! did ever mountain bring forth such a mouse!' exclaimed Mrs. Ely, laughing.

'Come and explain, Judith,' said Miss Conyers.

But Judith went first and closed the door of the state-room to keep the cat safe within it. And then she came up to the table where Miss Conyers and her companion sat, and she opened her apron and displayed its contents—three pretty kittens about four weeks old.

'Kittens!' exclaimed Miss Conyers, laughing, yet almost incredulous. 'How came they here?'

'Oh, what pretty creatures!' said Mrs. Ely.

'One white, one tortoise shell and one grey. How I would like to have one of them for a pet!' said Mrs. Breton.

'But where did they come from? I should as soon expect to find a squirrel, or a rabbit, or any other wild creature of the woods here, as a nest of kittens.'

'Well, ma'am, you see Sheelah—that's her as ran into the state-room—Sheelah was my pet cat. And I didn't know where to lave her whin I came to say; so I smuggled her on board ship and brought her wid me, the crayture!'

'But why smuggle her. Wouldn't the captain have let you bring your cat? There are animals enough on board, the dear knows,' said Mrs. Ely.

'Faix, ma'am, and so there is. And the captain might have let me fast enough; but the crew wouldn't, sure!'

'But why not?' asked Mrs. Breton.

'Sure ma'am, and don't you know the sailors can't abide a cat aboard ship? Faix, if they found my cat they'd throw her into the say in no time at all.'

'But what's their objection to a harmless cat?' questioned Mrs. Breton.

'Sure ma'am that's just where it is. They don't think her harmless at all. They think she's a perfect devil's imp at say. And that she will bring all sorts of misfartunes on to thim and their ship; bad weather, and storms, and shipwrecks and that. And sure if they found a cat on board, they'd soon make mincemate for the fishes of the cat, and two heads of her owner.'

'Oh my!' exclaimed Mary Ely.

'Dear me!' murmured Martha Breton.

'It is true,' said Britomarte. 'I have often heard that sailors have such a superstitious terror of a cat on board of a ship that they will go to any length, even to mutiny if necessary, to get rid of it; for they think that the presence of the cat dooms the ship to destruction. So firmly fixed are they in this prejudice, that the captain and officers are said always to yield to it.'

'Thrue for ye, ma'am! and the captain himself couldn't save my poor cat, once the sailors got wind iv her. That will be the raison why I had to smuggle her on board and kape her locked up in me own locker, along with the shates and pillow cases.'

'Oh, Judith!—But about the kittens?' said Mrs Ely.

'Yes ma'am. Sure whin we had been at say two weeks, she made me a present of three kittens. And I kept thim all in my locker—both the cat and the kittens—and fed thim and tinded them, like babies; 'till now they've growed so big and so wild and playful; I'm just 'fraid of me life the sailors will hear thim and throw thim into the say. So sure, to-day I watched me time and hid thim in my apron and made a run for the cabin; I thought the little crayturs would plase you.'

'And so they will, Judith—the pets! we shall be glad to have them. The dear knows we have little enough to amuse us in this floating prison. But what was it frightened you so?' inquired Mrs. Breton. 'You looked as if you were chased by a panther when you scuffled down the cabin stairs so fast.'

'And why wouldn't I, itself? Sure wasn't I flying for life? lasteways for the cat and kittens' lives? And didn't I mate Foretop Tom as had been taking his turn at the wheel and he was coming down below just as I was coming up. "And what hev yo got there, Judy?" sez he. "Where?" sez I, wid me heart in my mouth. "There, sure," sez he—"kivered up in yer ap'on." "Oh, thin, it will be something belonging to the ladies in the cabin," sez I—"as wouldn't be decent for a jintleman to see." And faix I ran past him as fast as I could go, and almost fell down the cabin stairs, as you saw, ladies—to my nothing iv the haste Sheelah as have almost scratched my arms to bits, and I risking my skin to save her life! But ye'll not be letting the sailors have her or her kitties, will yez, ladies?'

'No,' said Britomarte, 'we will take care of your pets. But what do you think of yourself, Judith, for keeping four cats in the ship? Surely if one cat will bring destruction to the ship, four will bring destruction not only to the ship, but to all the crew.'

'Sure, ma'am, it's joking wid me ye are. Yourself don't belave that same! It's only the sailors that make such bastes of themselves!' said Judith, with a confident air.

'You are quite right, Judith. We have no misgivings on the subject. Your favourites shall be safe with us. They will help to while away many a heavy day,' said Miss Conyers.

'And ye'll place warn the jintlemen not to tell iv the cat and kitties?'

'We'll give bonds that they shall not open their mouths on the subject outside of this cabin,' said Mrs. Ely.

'Thank Moses!' fervently exclaimed Judith. 'Sure it's a great relief to my mind is that same!'

And then she solemnly [illegible] over her charge—putting the [illegible] in Miss Conyers' lap, the grey [illegible] and the tortoise shell in Mrs. [illegible].

And only those who have been for many weeks cribbed up in the cabin of a sailing ship, without any novelty to change the monotony of their lives, can know what a recreation the playful little animals were to two at least of the lonely young women. They took a childish pleasure in decorating the little creatures with gay ribbon collars and in displaying them to their husbands.

Britomarte saw a great deal of Justin. Not only did they meet at the three meals that were served in the dining saloon, where the conversation was always general, but also on deck in the morning and the afternoon, and in the cabin in the evening; but Justin seemed to make no progress in the favour of his beloved. It is true that he did no once again, by word or look, express his love. He was very guarded. He talked of books, of missions, of social reforms, of everything and anything, or nothing rather than of that; and Britomarte met him frankly on this ground. And singularly enough, neither Justin nor Britomarte found the sea-voyage half so tedious as did their fellow-passengers.

But a sea-voyage, like all other things, comes to an end some time or other, or somehow or other. Their voyage was approaching the end of its first run—to the Cape Verde Islands.

The morning succeeding [illegible] adventure with the kittens, the cap ain [illegible] at the breakfast table—

'If this wind holds, we shall make Port Praya the day after to-morrow.'

And if he had said—

'We shall all realise immense fortunes the day after to-morrow,' his words could not have produced so great delight.

The next morning, when the ladies came out of their state-rooms, Mr. Breton, who had been out early on deck, came down into the cabin, and after greeting the party said—

'We are now within the tropics. We crossed Cancer in the night. We shall make the Cape Verde Islands to-morrow evening.'

'I hope so,' answered his wife; 'but, oh dear! and oh dear! "hope deferred maketh the heart sick," you know; and the bourne of our voyage seems to recede as we advance, like a movable horizon, to which there will be no termination.'

'Yes; but there is a termination near at hand; keep up!'

At breakfast that morning they had nothing but salt fish as a relish to their bread and butter and coffee. The steward explained that the fresh provisions were running low; that they had only enough left to serve two meals; and that it would be reserved for dinner that day and the next day.

'Which looks like coming to an end of this part of the voyage,' whispered Mrs. Breton, hopefully.

'It looks like coming to an end of our provender,' laughed her husband, as he helped her to a piece of dried haddock.

'We shall see land to-morrow,' said the cap ain.

And 'we shall see land to-morrow,' was the chief burden of the conversation among the passengers all that day. It was the supplement of their good-night, when they separated to retire to their state-rooms, and the next morning it was only slightly varied by—

'We shall see land to-day.'

And all day long they were all on deck, with their telescope, on the watch for land. It was of no use for the officers to assure them that such vigilance was uncalled for, as the man stationed aloft on the lookout would be the first to announce it. They all chose to stay on deck in the burning heat, and use their own eyes and glass.

Nevertheless the forenoon passed, dinner time came and went [illegible] the afternoon waned, and night set [illegible] there was no land in sight. They [illegible] very late, and at length rejectantly [illegible] below and turned in.

'I knew we [illegible] it! I knew it was all a hallucination, the idea of our ever getting any nearer [illegible] place! We are going on and on, [illegible] waters forever and ever. That's my [illegible],' complained Mrs. Breton, as she [illegible] into her state-room.

She was mistaken, of course, as all impatient people always are; for the passengers had scarcely dropped into their first doze when they were startled out of it by a trumpet cry, from the man on the lookout, of—

'Land-ho!'

Those who have heard that cry at sea only know its rapture or its anguish; for

sometimes it means life, and sometimes—death!

To our sea-weary voyagers it simply meant—change! but it filled them with delight for all that.

They turned out quickly, hurried on what clothes lay nearest at hand, and hastened into the cabin.

The ladies remained below, but the gentlemen went up on deck.

In the purple darkness of the tropical night, however, they could see nothing. The officer of the watch informed them that they had made out the Cape Verde Islands, but also assured them that they would not reach Port Praya before morning.

With this news the gentlemen went down below, where, after mutual congratulations, the little party once more bade each other good-night, and turned in and composed themselves to sleep. After their watching and excitement they slept long and soundly, and late into the next morning.

When Britomarte came out of her state-room, she found Judith alone in the cabin and in the act of stowing away baskets of oranges, lemons, bananas and other tropical fruits, into that omnium gatherum, the spare state-room.

'Sure we're in port at last, ma'am,' she said, 'in spite of the cat and kittens, which the sailors, the haythen, always think will wreck us.'

'I am very glad. Where are the ladies?—on deck?' inquired Britomarte, looking around.

'No, ma'am; sure, they're slaping like angels after being so tired; but the jintlemen are all there a-trading with the natives, as have boarded the ship like a gang of wild pirates entirely! Look what a lot iv bananys and trash they're after buying,' said Judith, pointing in strong disapprobation to the baskets of fruit that cumbered up the spare state-room.

Britomarte looked and laughed, and then stepped into her own state-room and caught up her veil and parasol and went up on deck.

'Good morning, Miss Conyers. Here we are at Port Praya,' said Justin Rosenthal, receiving her at the top of the stairs.

'Let us congratulate each other, then, that the Cape Verde Islands are not the *fata morgana* that Mrs. Breton feared,' replied Britomarte, as she stepped upon deck.

Mr. Breton, Mr. Ely, and several of the ship's officers greeted her with good morning. She smiled in acknowledgment of their salutations, and walked forward, to look around her.

It was a novel and curious scene. The ship was anchored just within the entrance of the harbour, and the quaint little town of Porto Praya—half Portuguese, half African—half civilized and half barbarous, and wholly unique in character and appearance—lay at a short distance off. The ship was surrounded with bum-boats, filled with provisions of all sorts—sheep, pigs, poultry, the fine fruits, the cheap wines, and the small manufactures of the islands, and the deck was crowded with a motley mob of Portuguese, negroes and half-breeds, whose clacking voices nearly deafened their hearers, as they vaunted their wares and solicited custom.

Nearly everybody bought something of them; but it was a good while before the deck was cleared of the crowd and the bum-boats left the sides of the ship.

Then the officers and passengers prepared to go to breakfast. Just as they were passing the cabin doors, Mrs. Ely and Mrs. Breton made their appearance on deck, as full of wonder at the new scene as though they had never beheld land in all their lives before.

'You two have missed a good thing. You have missed the bum-boats and the traders,' said Mr. Ely.

'Oh, we don't mind that—we are so glad to be here,' replied Mrs. Breton. And they all went to the breakfast-table.

'We shall remain here for twenty-four hours,' said the captain. 'We shall have to take in fresh water and provisions enough to last until we arrive to the Cape of Good Hope. So we shall not be able to make sail before to-morrow morning. There is a boat getting ready to go on shore; and if any of the passengers would like to take a look at the town, now is their opportunity to do so.'

Of course every one of the passengers would like to take a look at the town; they would like to look at any town after looking at nothing but water so long, and especially they would like to look at this queer town, which was a foreign one, and a great curiosity.

So they soon hurried through with their breakfast, and hastened down below to get ready to go on shore. They lost no time, but soon came on deck—the ladies dressed in their thin summer mantles, light bonnets and thick veils, and with their large sun-shades in their hands, though this was the tenth of November, but it was summer there.

The yawl-boat, with its little crew and two of the officers, was waiting for them below the starboard gangway.

The ladies were assisted down into it, and the gentlemen followed.

'Only think,' said Mrs. Ely; 'it is six weeks since we crawled up the side of the ship by the rope ladder and were so frightened. And we have never been off her from that time to this. And now we don't mind coming down in the same way at all. Dear me, we've seen plenty of rope climbing since then.'

'You will be able to climb the mainmast before we get to India,' laughed her husband.

Ah, they were all so gay at the idea of a little change.

The boat put off from the side of the ship, and a few minutes of rapid rowing brought them to the rude pier of the little town, where they all jumped ashore with a hearty if unpolished zest to the land.

But what a quaint little outlandish place it was, to be sure. How still, lonely, and shadowless it seemed.

In the quiet little harbour they had just left, beside their own ship, there was but one other ship—a Portuguese trader, just from the Cape of Good Hope.

In the quiet little town they just entered there seemed just life enough to keep it from death. How different from the busy cities, towns and villages of their native country.

At the entrance of the principal thoroughfare, the two officers went off together to transact some business of their own in the town—probably relating to the purchase of provisions.

When the officers were gone, our little party of six, that up to this time had straggled along in a very disorderly manner, now formed itself into marching order.

Mr. and Mrs. Breton, and Mr. and Mrs. Ely walked in pairs together, as orthodox married people should do, particularly when they belong to the clergy.

Justin Rosenthal walked quietly beside Britomarte, without risking his position with her by offering his arm.

And so they went through that strange little seaport town, so little known to the rest of the world, so little frequented except by ships bound to and from the Cape of Good Hope and the Indies; that hybrid town, in its character half European and half African, half civilised and half savage, with its narrow streets, and gayly painted houses; its mixed population of Portuguese, or 'Gens,' as they are called there, negroes and half-breeds; and with its gay booths, where fruits, wines, tobacco, amber, and ivory are exposed for sale.

All through these streets our little party walked. They were occasionally hailed by the vendors behind the booths, and invited to buy. But the two missionaries had little money to spare, and that had already been spent among the owners of the barn-boats earlier in the morning.

Justin, however, was more fortunate, and he bought fruits, jellies, amber ornaments, fancy pottery and other 'notions,' which he pressed upon the acceptance of the two married ladies, and with which they loaded down those patient beasts of burden, their husbands.

Not to appear singular, or to attach too much importance to such a trifle, Miss Conyers followed their example so far as to accept an amber comb, for which she thanked Mr. Rosenthal with as much grace and sweetness as if she had been a queen graciously accepting an offering from the most favoured of her nobles.

They walked through the town, and out into the country, where they looked with interest the scattered cabanas of the Portuguese colonists, surrounded by groves of palm, tamarind and calamander trees, and cultivated fields of maize, rice, tobacco and sugar. There, too, they saw the coffee, the indigo, and other tropical plants in the natural state. But among all these novel objects, what struck them as the strangest, were the American domestic animals—cows, sheep, pigs, goats and poultry, so much at home, amidst foreign and tropical island.

It was late in the afternoon when they retraced their steps into the town, and down to the harbour, where they signalled the ship, which sent a boat to bring them off. It was sunset when they reached the Sultana.

CHAPTER XV.

OVER SEAS UPON THE WATERS.

He pauses to gather his fearful breath,
And lifts up his voice like the angel of death!
And the billows leap up when the summons they hear,
And the ship flies away as if winged with fear;
And the uncouth monsters that dwell in the deep,
Start up at the sound from their floating sleep,
And career through the waters like clouds through the night,
To share in the tumult their joy and delight.
—L. M. L.

'Welcome back again!' said Captain McKenzie, as he received his passengers on deck.

'Welcome back to our floating prison!' laughed Mrs. Breton; 'which we shan't be able to leave again for another six weeks, I suppose.'

'Not until we reach Cape Town; which, if we have very good luck, we may reach in that time,' answered the captain.

The deck was piled with barrels, bales, boxes, bails and hampers, which the sailors had not yet had the opportunity to remove and stow away.

Our little party were tired and hungry; so they made their way as well as they could through all obstructions, and went down into their cabin to lay off their bonnets and hats, and see about getting something to eat.

They found Judith in possession of the premises. She waited on them kindly; supplied them with fresh water and clean towels, and informed them that 'the captain had ordered tay to be got ready immadiately on account of the ladies, and that it was to be a "tay-dinner" sure, with a plinty of fresh mate, and vigitables, and beautiful fried chicken, with parsley gravy, so it was.'

And, in fact, by the time they had all washed their faces, combed their hair, and arranged their dresses, the nondescript but excellent evening meal was ready, and they were called to the table.

'After all, it is like coming home to come on board of the ship to the care of Judith and the captain. I think we must have the best stewardess and the best captain that ever was in this world,' said Mrs. Ely, as they all went to the dining-cabin.

'Oh dear!' said Mrs. Breton; 'yes, it is like coming home—but it is like coming home to prison; where, to be sure, we have got a humane jailer and a good-natured female warder! But I shall be glad when we have all served our time out, and are set at liberty.'

The merry party that gathered around the bountifully spread table that evening. All had been on shore at one time or another during the day. And each had his little experience to give of his intercourse with the simple natives or cunning colonists.

The sitting around the table was prolonged. When the company arose, our little party retired to their cabin, where the gentlemen left the ladies, while they themselves returned to the deck.

Judith, as usual, was busy flitting in and out of the state-room, putting in order things that were indeed sufficiently so before she touched them. When she got through she sat down to rest on the lowest step of the cabin stairs.

The ladies had gathered around their table; and taken out of their pockets some fine bright yarn that they had purchased in the town; and they were now commencing a new series of crochet work.

Britomarte turned to where the Irish girl was squatting, with her elbows on her knees and her chin in the palms of her hands.

'Did you get leave to go on shore, Judith?' inquired Miss Conyers.

'Sure, yes ma'am, meself and Misthress Mullony, and Mike and Foretop Tom wint on in company. And be the same token, Foretop Tom prisinted me with a prisint iv a parrit. And faix meself thinks it will be just the aquakingest crayture that iver was, entirely; though sure I'd rather have itself, or two iv it, than the grinning baste of a monkey that Misther Mullony bought for Biddy. And ah! ma'am, about Mike Mullony, sure. Yer eight to know ye did him a dale of good with the bl[illegible] up ye gave him!'

'Ah! I hope he treats his wife better than he did!' said Miss Conyers.

'Ye may jist believe he does that same, ma'am! Sure he's niver riz his hand ag'in Biddy since, at all at all! Faix he says he does, ye made him fale like a shape-catalar, entirely.'

'I am very glad of it,' said the merciless man-hater, 'and I hope he'll continue to feel like a thief every time he remembers striking his wife!'

'Faix, thin, ma'am, it's yerself would break the bruised [illegible] and smoke the squinching flax! Troth, and ye'll give a poor crayture no cridit, at all at all, for rapintance and amindment!' muttered Judith to herself.

Miss Conyers did not hear her, or she did not heed her. She continued, as if the woman had not spoken:

'But, Judith, my girl, you are a good creature, and I take a warm interest in you. Now about this Foretop Tom! I wouldn't be taking presents from him, and accepting of his escort on shore, and all that sort of thing! It might encourage him to make love to you, you know.'

'Sure, ma'am, and where's the harm?' said Judith, violently blushing, and rolling the ends of her apron.

'He might wish to marry you, and you would never consent to that, with the prejudices of Mr. and Mrs. Mullony before your eyes.'

'Faix, ma'am, and why wouldn't I, itself? Sure me and Tom are troth-plighted this many a day, and we'll be married if ever we get home ag'in from this voyage.'

'Oh, dear me!' exclaimed the man-hater,

dropping her work and gazing compassionately upon the victim.

Apparently Judith could not stand the gaze, so she quickly arose, smoothed down her apron, and made away up the cabin stairs.

There was a great deal of noise on deck that evening, with the sailors receiving and stowing away the provisions for the long voyage. There was a rolling of barrels and dragging of boxes, mingled with the bleating of sheep, the squealing of pigs, the roaring of officers and the brawling of men.

It seemed that even the gentlemen couldn't endure the noise of things above, for very soon they came down below.

And the little party being tired, soon separated and turned in.

But the noise and confusion on deck, the rolling and heeling, the bleating and squealing, the swearing and hallooing, and the running and racing to and fro, continued nearly all night.

It was long after midnight when any of our passengers got to sleep. Near dawn they were awakened by another series of noise. It was the seamen getting up the anchor and hoisting the sails. But being very tired, the slumberers turned over and went to sleep again.

When they woke up in the morning, the ship had already made sail, and was flying eastward before a fair wind, at the rate of eight knots an hour.

When they dressed and went on deck, they found themselves on the open sea once more, with the land nearly out of sight. Looking in the direction of the Cape Verde Islands, they saw only a shadowy line on the horizon that might have been cloud, or fog, or land; but it was the shore they had left with the first tide that morning.

'Well,' said Mrs. Bruton, the despondent, 'we have made Port Praya, that bourne of our many days' hopes, and we have left it, and are at sea again, with a prospect of a much longer and rougher voyage before us than the one we left behind us, and now what better off are we for our visit?'

'Oh, a great deal!' said Mrs. Fry, the hopeful; 'we have seen Port Praya, we have got some curiosities and remembrances of the Cape Verde Islands, and lastly, we have laid in a fine, large supply of fresh water and provisions.'

The ship was crowded with all the canvas she should bear, and was going finely; but the day was blazing hot, so after breakfast the ladies were driven into the cabin, to take shelter from the sun's insufferable heat, and there they sat fanning themselves, and [illegible] and sweltering until dinner time.

Why should I run the risk of wearying my readers by giving the details of their life during this portion of their voyage? In most respects it was exactly like what it had been ever since they had been at sea, except that the weather grew hotter and hotter, as they sailed nearer and nearer the equator, and the ladies wore their lightest summer clothing, and staid in the cabin nearly all day, fanning themselves and drinking cooling beverages.

On the first of December, at seven o'clock in the morning, they crossed the Equator. And this seemed to be the great event of the voyage. Very early in the morning a sort of Admiral of mermaids took command of the ship, deposing, for the time being, her legitimate officers. The cabin passengers were soon roused out of their sleep by the noise over their heads. And when, after a hurried toilet, they all, nearly simultaneously, came out of their state-rooms to see what the matter was, Judith answered:

'There it's crossing the line we are, and the sailors are receiving Neptune on board.'

'Oh!' they all exclaimed in a breath. They had all heard of this grotesque ceremony, but of course they had never seen it, so they hurried up on deck to be at hand to do honour to his Marine Majesty.

What a scene of confusion met their eyes. The men were all gathered aft, where, in their midst, stood one of their number, dressed to represent Neptune, the their idea of Neptune. But surely sea-king, nor any other king, ever were such extraordinary robes. The king's face was concealed by a hideous mask; two sheep-skins, with the wool on, tied around his lower limbs, did duty as trousers; an ox-hide, with the hair on, supplied the royal cloak; the horns formed the crown. In his regal hands he held, by way of a trident, a huge three-pronged pitchfork.

Immediately around and in attendance upon his majesty, were the high officers and nobles of his court—common dressed as mermen, or according to their ideas of these fabulous beings.

They seemed to have just passed from a parade round and round the deck, for a nobleman, apparently high in court office—probably Lord High Chamberlain, or something of that sort—superbly dressed in a court costume of a dried alligator's skin, and carrying an oar by way of a baton, stood in front of the king, as though ready to clear the way for the royal progress.

Seeing the approach of the cabin passengers, this high official dignitary brought

down the end of his staff upon the deck with a stunning thump, and in a voice of thunder ordered the new comers to—

'Halt!'

And accordingly they halted—the two young wives frightened, trembling, and clinging to the arms of their husbands; and Bittemarte standing quietly alone, until she felt her hand gently taken and drawn through the arm of some one. She turned and saw Justin Rosenthal, who had come silently to her side. They bowed to each other simultaneously, and then turned to give attention to the Lord High Chamberlain, who seemed by his speech to be a son of Erin, and who was about to address them.

'And sure what are yez afther wanting at the court iv his Majesty Neptune, King of the High Seas?'

Mr. Rosenthal, with a gesture enjoining silence on his companions, undertook to speak for the whole party, and explained to his lordship that they had come to pay their respects to his royal master.

He had no sooner made this answer than, at a sign from the Lord High Chamberlain, another high official personage, gorgeously apparelled in a blue shirt and trowsers, embroidered all over with sea weeds, crab's claws and fish-tails, and bearing a large pewter pot, approached and offered the visitors refreshments in the form of a quart of sea-water to each individual.

Objection being made to this beverage, the royal cup-bearer informed them, that in rebuke to their rudeness in refusing to pledge the king in his own native element, they would each be fined a half dollar towards paying for grog, in which the crew might drink the royal health.

And at another sign from the Lord High Chamberlain, the royal treasurer, habited very much in the same style as the royal cup-bearer, and holding in his hand a conch-shell as the royal coal-box, came forward to collect the fine.

With another gesture recommending quiet to his companions, Justin Rosenthal took out his pocket-book and drew from it a half eagle, which he paid into the king's treasury.

As this sum was just twice as much as the amount of the fine laid on the offenders, the court of the Sea King so far forgot their offence and its own dignity, as to give them a running cheer.

After which the visitors were allowed to depart in peace, to get their breakfast.

Afterwards, instead of going on deck, where Neptune and his court were still holding high revelry and deviltry, they went down into the cabin, where Judith was, as usual, dusting and polishing.

'You have seen this ceremony often, I suppose, Judith?' said Mrs. Breton.

'Seen—me—which is it, ma'am?' inquired the bewildered girl.

'This frolic of the sailors—taking Neptune on board when they cross the line.'

'Yes, ma'am, sure! I've crossed the line thray times; though divil a line, begging your pardon, I ever saw it at all, at all, though I was to put my two eyes out on stocks to look for it! And a divil a line I believe will be in it. It will just be a make-up iv the sailors, the deceivers, for an excuse to have a frolic and get more grog,' said Judith.

And as she seemed very well satisfied with the result of her own reasoning on the subject, no one attempted to upset her judgment.

For three more hours the wildest uproar raged on deck.

At the end of that time, however, the men were piped to quarters, and fell into discipline as easily as if they had never been out of it.

And the ship sailed on, always towards the sun. Fair winds prevailed and nothing occurred either to alter the course of the ship, or vary the monotony of the voyage, until the morning of the sixth of December, when they passed to the eastward of Ascension Island.

All the passengers came on deck to see it, which they could easily do with the aid of the telescope, which was passed from hand to hand, as they stood on the starboard side of the deck, leaning over the bulwarks.

The island seemed a mountain rising out of the ocean.

'I wonder why it is called Ascension Island?' said Mrs. Breton.

Before any one else could answer, Judith, who stood behind the group, volunteered to explain—

'Sure, ma'am, it is aisy to see that same. Faix it will be called Ascension Island for the raison that it ascinds out of the say itself towards the sky!'

'Is that really the reason?' inquired Mrs. Ely.

'No,' laughed Miss Conyers, 'though in default of more accurate information, it is a very shrewd conjecture. It is called Ascension Island because it was first discovered on Ascension day.'

'Save, ma'am, that will be a bother raison still,' said the Irish girl.

They continued to gaze at the Island as long as it continued in sight; after which

they hurried away from the blazing heat of the deck to the shades of the cabin.

On and on over the world of waters they sailed, with no change from day to day, except the alternation of morning and night, and the shifting of the wind, until the afternoon of the thirteenth of December, when the cabin passengers were invited to come on deck to view the Island of St. Helena, so deeply interesting from its intimate association with the last days of Napoleon.

They passed so near, that, standing on the starboard gangway, with their naked eyes they could see the island—a cluster of rugged rocks rising from mid-ocean. Diana's Peak—the highest point—was shown them. And with the aid of the telescope they could see the trees and houses on the land—refreshing sight, after so much water.

They watched the island out of sight. Very reluctantly they saw it fade away in the distance, in the waste of waters behind them.

'Sure that's the last taste iv land we'll see till we get to the Cape,' said Judith, who, in the intimacy incident to their close confinement, had grown very familiar with the ladies in the cabin. 'Divil a bit more land will we see till we make Cape Town.'

'Judith, I must really request you not to swear so hard. It is bad enough in a man, but it is quite shocking in a woman,' said Mrs. B'y, very gravely.

'Lord be betune us and harm, ma'am. I niver swear. Divil an oath I ivir swore in my life! Sure me father would make two heaps of me if I did that same!' replied the astonished girl.

'Oh, Judith, Judith, you say—"divil,"' whispered Mrs. B'y, dropping her voice very low.

'Sure, ma'am, taking his name in vain ain't swearing at all! Is it Miss Biddy Martin? But sure, ladies, if yez don't like it, niver a bit will I spake it again.'

'We don't like it, Judith,' said Miss Cooyers, gravely; 'for though it is not an oath, yet it is not a pleasant word.'

'Then divil a bit will I ivir spake it again, ma'am,' said the incorrigible daughter of Erin.

'Oh, Judith! Judith! we must give you up for a bad job,' sighed Mrs. Breton.

'Faix, ma'am, ye'll be one of the ladies that is always giving up. Ye give up all hopes of seeing the Field of Prayer, do you did; but you saw it for all that! Misthress Aby will have more hopes iv me entirely; and Miss Biddy Martin knows that I mane what I say, itself,' said Judith, as she took up her dishes and traversed out of the cabin.

At tea, that evening, the captain cheered the hearts of his passengers by telling them, in answer to their questions, that if they should have good luck, they would be at Cape Town by New Year's Day.

On the twenty-fourth of December they crossed the Tropic of Capricorn, and after this the weather grew sensibly cooler, though at this time of the year it was mid-summer in the south temperate zone.

They kept Christmas really on board ship.

In the morning they had Divine worship in the dining cabin, and nearly all the officers and crew assisted at it.

Mr. Breton and Mr. Bly conducted the devotions and Mr. Rosenthal preached the sermon.

After morning service they had a sumptuous dinner, and sat over their dessert until a late hour in the afternoon.

In the evening, at the request of her fellow-voyagers, Miss Cooyers read the tragedy of King Lear to the passengers and officers of the ship assembled in the dining saloon. And again her amazing histrionic power excited the wonder and admiration of her audience, as with a protean magic she changed her voice, her face, almost her very identity, to suit the parts of the mad king, the blunt Kent, the tender Cordelia, the hatic Edgar, the faithful jester, and all the other dramatis personæ of the play.

'It is marvellous—it is incomprehensible!' said Captain McKenzie to little Dr. Van Dwyck, who sat beside him at the reading. 'I have heard many professional readers, and seen many celebrated actresses in my time and in my travels, and many of them were, no doubt, more cultivated than this young lady is in dramatic art; but I have never seen any—reader or actress, man or woman—with her incredible power of changing her very individuality to suit what she reads! It is absolutely like magic!'

'It is!' said the little doctor, 'almost magical! But what a power for good or evil that faculty is in her hands! It is a great and perilous gift both for herself and others. Think what she could do with it! Why, she could assume any character and go almost anywhere, at any time, with impunity! Heavens! What a successful spy she would make in war-time!'

'I cannot fancy her acting the part of a spy; there is something much too frank and noble about the girl! I can most easily imagine her, Joan-of-Arc-like, leading an

army!' said the captain, laughing, and then adding: 'But while we are criticising her reading we are losing the best part of it. Listen!'

She was reading the great scene in the last act, when the heart-broken old king comes in, bearing the body of the dead Cordelia in his arms. She read it with a truth to nature that drew tears from the sternest eyes among her hearers.

When the reading was over, the audience crowded towards the reader to offer their thanks and compliments.

But Miss Conyers had slipped away and was gone. In truth, though always willing to entertain her companions, and always delighting, with the true artist's delight, in the exercise of her genius, Britomarte was, as every refined nature is, exceedingly unwilling to listen to the vapid praises that often followed her exhibitions.

There was an elegant supper laid in the captain's cabin for the entertainment of his officers and passengers, and Miss Conyers was sent for, among the rest; but she sent back and begged to be excused from appearing. She passed the short remainder of the evening alone in the cabin, quietly reading, until her fellow-passengers came down. They entered as gaily and as much exhilarated as though they had just returned from some very successful evening party; but to avoid hearing the reading of Lear discussed, Miss Conyers arose, took up her book, and bade them all good-night.

So passed the festivity of Christmas Day, which indeed had been a very cheering episode in their long and monotonous sea-voyage.

But, ah! with their Christmas holidays passed away all their good weather.

To be sure they were approaching the Cape of Good Hope, and heavy gales and rough seas might be expected.

For seven days the ship had been sailing finely before a fair wind, and holding well her south-easterly course.

One splendid afternoon of a day that 'perished silently of its own glory,' the cabin passengers were all on deck, seated in the stern of the ship, and watching that one sublime spectacle that never grew monotonous by daily repetition—the setting of the sun at sea. They never withdrew their eyes from the retiring god.

'I wonder,' murmured Miss Conyers, more to herself than to others; 'I wonder why all persons are not sun-worshippers. It seems to me that we might be so without any derogation from the worship of God; rather, indeed, in enchantment of it. Honour shown to the vice-regent is honour shown to the king. The sun is the vice-regent of God for this planet. He is the nearest visible representative of the Creator. He is our physical source of heat, light, and life, as God is our spiritual source. He is the one object in all nature unapproachable in sublimity! The Persian Fire-Worshippers and the Peruvian Sun-Worshippers were as really rational and as nearly right as they could possibly be, wanting the Christian revelation.'

'But when the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and the sun and moon shall pass away and be blotted out, where will then be your god?' said Justin, solemnly.

'Where my soul shall be when my body shall be assembled to dust. Let me alone,' said Britomarte, gravely.

While they gazed, the sun sank suddenly down into the sea, and was out of sight. A mist as suddenly the wind fell. The effect of this unexpected lull was first felt in the changed motion of the ship. It was running on smoothly before a fair wind, when, from the instantaneous withdrawal of that impetus, the sails flapped, collapsed, and hung motionless, while the ship rolled a little from side to side, and then stood still, or nearly so.

'What's the matter?' inquired Mrs. Breton, who was always ready to take flight upon the least provocation.

'The wind has gone down,' answered her husband.

'And what will happen?'

'It may leave us in a dead calm for days, or it may rise in some other quarter and end in a gale.'

'A gale! oh, dear me!'

'There is no occasion for alarm, my dear, even if it should come. This is a good ship, and the captain is a good sailor, and both have weathered many a storm, you may be sure. But I am sorry I said anything about the prospect of one. If you look so terrified, I think, in future, I shall prophesy only smooth things to you.'

'Oh, no! don't please! tell me the truth! Let me know the worst at once!' said Mrs. Breton, in a sepulchral tone.

'"Worst," my child? there is no "worst" in the case! But come, there is the tea-bell! Let us go in.'

The next morning, the wind, that had sunk with the sun, rose with it, and from another quarter—from the north-east—and it blew a gale!

Mrs. Breton remained in the cabin, and could not be persuaded to leave it.

The other ladies were obliged to be help'd up the cabin stairs, and helped all the way

to the breakfast table, for the wind was so high, the sea so rough, and the rolling of the ship so great, that they could not either of them keep their feet or stand alone for a moment.

It was then that the Devil tempted Jim Rosenthal to dare to jest with the man-hater. As he carefully guided her steps to the breakfast table, and tenderly placed her in her seat, he whispered archly:

'We men have the happiness of knowing our strength is sometimes useful, and even necessary, to women.'

She flashed at him a blaze of resentment from her beautiful eyes, but bowing, answered smoothly:

'It is true, Mr. Rosenthal, but it is a happiness you share with the horse and the donkey; their strength is also sometimes useful, and even necessary to us. I am very grateful to you, however, for exerting yours in my service. Only you must found your claim to our esteem upon some higher plea.'

Justin bit his lip and laughed; he could not on the instant find a retort equal to the man-hater's merits.

But when breakfast was over, he did not any the less carefully and tenderly support and guide her steps from the saloon to the cabin door.

'For all I have said, Mr. Rosenthal, I am sensible of your kindness,' she admitted. And he knew that she spoke the truth, but he could not avoid saying, with a smile:

'Are you equally sensible of the kindness of the horse and the donkey, when they serve you?'

'Yes, I really am, when they do it kindly,' she answered, promptly. Then looking around, she said: 'I do not think that I will go down into the cabin; it is too close there. Will you kindly help me to some place on deck, where I can sit and hold on to something, while I enjoy this fine gale?'

'Certainly, if you wish to do so. But I recommend you not to try the experiment. You will be covered with spray, and wet through.'

'I have a good water-proof cloak in the cabin.'

'And your good water-dog will run and fetch it,' said Justin, starting off on the errand.

He soon returned with the garment, and wrapped her carefully in it, and took her to the stern, where, under the cover of the wheel-house, he found her a safe and comfortable seat.

'I do thank you very much for the trouble you have taken, Mr. Rosenthal. I wish I could find some way of rewarding it,' said Miss Conyers, betraying an uneasy sense of obligation.

He stooped and whispered:

'It is written that "virtue is its own reward." I do not know whether that is true or not; I doubt very much whether it is; but I do know that any service I can render you is its own exceeding great reward! But all this is making too much of a trifle,' he concluded.

And then, lest he should be tempted into saying something that might lose him the little ground that he thought he had gained in her confidence, he walked away.

But he did not leave the deck or lose sight of her. He remained there to watch over her, to see that she did not get into danger while she staid there, and to be at hand to guide her steps when she should be ready to go below.

But the gale increased in strength, the motion of the ship became dangerous to landsmen, and Justin came to the side of Miss Conyers, and entreated her to allow him to take her down.

And for once she complied with his request.

In the cabin Britomarte found her frightened female companions seated on the floor, and cowering together, and listening to the yarns of Judith, who, seated near the foot of the stairs was engaged in soothing their fears with graphic descriptions of all the terrific storms and hair-breadth 'scapes she had herself encountered in her sea life.

'Oh, I'm so glad you have come down, Britomarte! There is real strength and comfort in your presence, dear. And here is Martha, almost terrified out of her senses; and I cannot reassure her, because I am not in a much better plight myself,' said Mrs. Ely, with an attempt to smile.

As Justin, after 'landing' Miss Conyers safely at the foot of the stairs, turned to re-ascend them, Mrs. Ely caught his coat-skirts, and held him fast, exclaiming:

'Oh, don't go, Mr. Rosenthal! please don't! Here we are, almost dead with fear, and this dreadful ship rolling so that we have to sit on the floor to keep from being beaten to death! And our husbands on deck, or dear-knows where!'

'Thank you very much for the invitation. I shall be but too glad to remain with you,' said Justin.

'And you would find our sitting on the floor, will you? better than getting tumbled off the chairs every time we try to sit on them.'

'Oh, not at all!' laughed the young man.

'And you won't mind having Judith go on with her story, will you, Mr. Rosenthal? It is such an interesting account of the

dreadful gale this very ship was in in these very latitudes on her last passage to India,' said Mrs. Ely, smiling.

'Oh, no, if you do not; but I must mention that I do not consider it the most cheering subject she could choose.'

'O., no, indeed! it is very depressing; but still, I like to know the worst,' sighed Mrs. Breton.

'O., but I don't think it depressing at all. I think it very encouraging, for, only see, she who tells it has come safely through it. And that is the reason why I like to hear it,' said Mrs. Ely.

And, indeed, from all appearances, the narrative of Judith seemed to take very opposite effect upon Mary Ely, the hopeful, and Martha Breton, the despondent. Martha was full of fear of a possible storm, while Mary was full of hope of weathering the very worst that might come.

'Go on Judith; tell us the worst,' sighed Mrs. Breton.

'Well, thin, ma'am, sure the worst was over once we got into Table Bay, itself. But troth! we'd all a' been lost that time, if the Hooley Virgin hadn't been in it!'

'The Holy Virgin in it! Do you mean in the ship or in the sea, or what do you mean?' inquired Mrs. Ely.

'Sure, ma'am, thin, I mane she's the Star of the Say itself; and sure she watches over poor saymen day and night. But ye'll not honour the Hooly Virgin, yerselfs.'

Mrs. Ely and Mrs. Breton said neither yes nor nay; perhaps they did not quite understand the drift of the woman's speech, and perhaps they did not wish to commit themselves. So Judith looked hurt; but Miss Conyers, who was seated in a low easy-chair, at a short distance from them, and who managed to keep her seat very well, notwithstanding the rolling of the ship, answered earnestly, for herself and her companions.

'But you mistake, Judith. We do honour the mother of Christ. We honour every good and great woman that ever lived and died! And above all women, I hope we honour the mother of our Saviour—the woman who bore him and reared him and suffered with him in his cuff rings, as no other human creature ever could or ever can; who was the object of his own tender care even in the midst of his death agony—his mother. I should suppose the thought of her would awaken the tenderest and holiest love in every woman's heart. And Protestant as I am, I deeply love and honour the memory of Mary, the mother of Jesus.'

'Ah, hivven bless you for saying that same, thin, ma'am, though yez know other people don't!' exclaimed warm-hearted Judith.

'Men don't! They almost ignore her existence! But then they mean no especial disrespect to her individually. It is only all of a piece with their general treatment of women!' said Miss Conyers.

'Ah, the bastes! A taste of the salt say wather itself would be good for them! And sure I won't tear me gown off for grief, if they get it!' said Judith, warmly; then happening to remember the presence of one of the natural enemy, she threw him a glance of mingled fright and deprecation, exclaiming:

'Lord betune us and harm, sir! sure I forgot ye were there. Sure, sir, I beg your pardon, entirely.'

'If is willingly granted, my good girl. But I have a word to say in our defence, to Miss Conyers,' said Mr. Rosenthal. Then turning to Britomarte, he continued:

'I think you are a little unjust. We honour each and all connected with our blessed Lord and Saviour; but we are careful not to let our honour run into that worship which is due only to Him and His Father.'

'Do I let the honour I pay to the mother of Christ run into such idolatry?' coldly inquired Miss Conyers.

'No, perhaps not; because you have great control over your affections; and can say to them—"thus far, and no farther;" but it is not every one that can do that.'

'Dear me, Britomarte!' says Mrs. Breton, uneasily—'One does not know what to make of you! You call yourself a Christian and a Protestant; yet yesterday from your conversation we might almost have suspected you of being a Fire Worshipper; and to-day by your talk one would think you a Roman Catholic—'

A violent lurch of the ship cut short the speech by tumbling the speaker over and rolling her off to the other side of the cabin.

Justin Rosenthal sprang to her assistance; and lifted her up and set her right and soothed her terrors.

Britomarte answered:

'Since I am required to define my position, I declare myself to be a—Free Christian; loving all that is lovable, adoring all that is adorable, and worshipping the One who is Divine.'

Whether any one among her companions felt inclined to take exceptions to this liberal profession of faith, can never be known, for as she spoke the motion of the ship became so excessively rough that Mrs. Ely, Mrs. Breton, and Judith Riordan were thrown down and rolled over and over to-

gether from side to side of the cabin. And Miss Conyers only managed to escape the same ignominious fate by clinging with all her strength to the support of the centre-table, which was a fixture.

At the same time the ship took in a great wave, that dashed upon the deck and poured into the cabin.

'Put up the dead lights!' thundered a voice above the roaring of the wind and waves.

'Dead lights! Heaven and earth, we are lost!' cried Mrs. Breton, in the extremity of terror, as she rolled over and over.

'Divil a bit iv it are we lost, thin!' said Judith struggling up on her hands and trying to regain her feet. 'This is nothing at all, at all! This is only what the say-men call a "capfull o' wind," sure. Wait till yez get doubling the Cape, or into the Indian Say. Thin, yo'll see a rowling ship entirely!'

'But the dead lights,' wailed Mrs. Breton; 'what do they mean by putting up the dead lights?'

'Sure they don't mane candles to burn over our corpses! as ye'll seem to think? Sure it's a way they have of saying, "Come the windy-shutters!"'

'Is that all?'

'Troth it is. Only they can niver spake sinsible, the haythen.'

While Judith spoke, Justin Rosenthal was busy giving what assistance he could to the sprawling woman. He had helped Mrs. Ely into her state-room, where she took shelter in her lowest berth. And now he came to render a similar service to Mrs. Breton. But at that moment the two miscreantes came stumbling down into the cabin.

'A terrible gale,' said Mr. Ely, as he went pitching into his state-room.

Mr. Breton went to the assistance of his wife.

The cabin was closed up; and the gale still increased in violence.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE GALE.

The storm howls madly o'er the sea,
The winds their loudest anthems sing,
And billows rolling fearfully,
In concert with the whirlwind sing.
—*Rev. J. W. Magill.*

For three days the gale continued to blow from the same quarter, the north-east, with unabated violence. The good ship could do little else but lie-to and run away before the furious blast. Even in the day, the sky was nearly as black as night with the troubling storm-clouds. The sea, lashed to fury by the wind, reared in high, shelving cliffs of foam, and struck in thunder upon the deck, as if to dash the ship into pieces, or open in deep, gaping caverns of darkness, as if to engulf her with all on board.

But the brave ship flew on under the lowering sky and over the stormy ocean, now riding high upon the top of some great billow, now plunging deep into some yawning abyss, now rolling in the trough of the sea, and again flying onward, pursued by the utmost fury of winds and waves, that roared and howled behind her, like spirits of destruction hunting their prey. Yet the gale never assumed the aspect of a hurricane, nor was the ship driven much out of her course. But the captain seldom or never left the deck; the officers were on duty day and night, and the crew were worked almost to exhaustion.

The lady passengers were obliged to remain confined to their cabin. Miss Conyers had made many brave attempts to go up on deck to witness the war of winds and waves, but had always been baffled and driven back into the cabin, where her fellow voyagers sat flat upon the floor, to avoid being beaten to death by the pitching and tossing of the ship. And it was a great, secret mortification to woman's proud young champion to find that while the 'common enemy' could remain on deck, and contend with the greatest fury of the elements, and be their masters, she and her female companions were compelled by their physical delicacy to seek shelter in the cabin in ignominious idleness and helplessness—as she bitterly characterized their condition.

And there was Justin Rosenthal, always on the deck giving what aid he could, and often at the wheel, taking his turn to relieve the worn-out helmsman.

At least a score of times she essayed to go above, but in vain. Her beautiful person was formed to delight the eyes and attract the hearts of that 'common enemy' whom she abhorred and renounced, rather than to rival their skill in such feats of masculine strength and marine gymnastics as were necessary to all who might attempt to tread with impunity that stormy deck. After her last futile attempt to go up the cabin stairs, she sat down on the floor in the midst of her companions, and held out her lovely hands and arms, and gazed on them in disgust and resentment, saying contentiously:

'I wonder what, in the name of spite and absurdity, Nature meant when she put my soul into such a ridiculous body as this, which is of no more use to me in a gale of

wind them a ball dress would be to the man at the helm? Really, Dame Nature makes such droll mistakes sometimes, one would think she drinks!'

'O., Britomarte!' exclaimed Martha Breton, who was almost expiring with fatigue from being here on deck so much, as well as with terror of what all this violent motion might end in; 'oh, for goodness gracious sake, do stop with your dreadful blasphemies, for indeed they are nothing better than blasphemies! I am afraid to listen to them in this awful storm. It is as much as ever I can do to live through the machinations of this lunatic of an old ship. She turns a somersett every five minutes—that she does!—goes heels over head, or keel over deck, or who ever you call that capsize a ship which would be leap-frog in a man. If I had known what it was going to be to come out as a missionary, I would have trusted the souls of the savages to the mercy of the Lord, rather than ed my body to the madness of the sea—that I would!'

Britomarte laughed at her ludicrous distress, and then Martha Breton cried.

It was at this point of time that Mr. Ely and Mr. Breton were finally driven down into the cabin, which they left no more while the gale continued.

And now that two of the common enemy were compelled to succumb, and confess themselves conquered by the elements, and come ruined to seek shelter among the women in the cabin, that cabin was no longer a valley of humiliation to woman's young champion. During the continuance of the gale, their meals were served to them there, but very irregularly, and of very badly cooked food, and general discomfort and danger prevailed.

But the gallant ship rode out the gale in safety, and with the close of the third day, the wind, that had risen with the sun three days before, went down with the sun at its setting. In the course of the night the turbulent sea subsided.

The next morning all was calm and bright. The weather was beautiful. The ship was brought to her course again, and with all her sails set, was running before a light, fair wind, at rate of six knots an hour.

The two young missionaries in the cabin offered up thanksgiving to Him who rules the storm, for their preservation from what they supposed to have been a very great danger, and then they helped the ladies up on deck. That morning they met the captain and some of the ship's officers again at breakfast table, and exchanged mutual congratulations upon the improvement in the weather. Afterwards they promenaded the deck.

Justin Rosenthal walked forward with eagerness to welcome Miss Conyers to his care more.

'How did you bear the gale?' he anxiously inquired, as he took her hand.

'Indifferently, thank you,' she answered briefly.

'The worst circumstance connected with it, to me, was the loss of your society. You did not venture on deck, I think, once after I had seen you down?'

'Yes, I did venture, but not successfully. Falstaff explained his retreat by saying that his "cowardly legs" ran away with him; I may say with more truth that my own good for nothing limbs failed to accomplish the task I set them! My feet slid from under me, and my hands allowed themselves to be torn from their hold,' said Britomarte, looking down with contempt upon her own slight and elegant figure.

'Beauty is not created to serve, but to subject servants. Here are a pair of hands and feet ready to work and walk in your service as long as their owner's life shall last!' said Justin, earnestly.

'I had hoped that you were superior to saying such things to me, Mr. Rosenthal. I want no man to devote, or profess to devote, himself to my service. It is an obligation which I can't repay, and therefore won't accept; so if we are to continue to be good friends, you must let me hear no more of that,' said Britomarte, firmly.

Justin bowed and smiled, and answered:

'Agreed. I am bound and captive, and not in a condition to make terms with my fair conqueror. But conquerors should be magnanimous, and one would think that the most virulent man-hater would take pity on a victim in my wretched plight.'

'There again!' she exclaimed, her eyes flashing fire, for there was a half-earnest half-bantering tone in his speech that almost infuriated her.

'I have done!' he exclaimed, hastily, and raising his hand deprecatingly. 'Not another word will I say on that forbidden subject. Let us talk of something more congenial to your sentiments. Shall it be—Woman's Rights?'

'Yes, we will talk o' Woman's Rights, if you will take up the subject reverently and not sacreligiously, as I sometimes suspect you of doing.'

'Then reverently will I approach the sacred theme! And in all good faith I will inquire of you this—Has your experience of the last three days strengthened your conviction that women are constituted to

compete with men in all his forms of labour? —in the navigation of a ship in a gale, for instance?'

For a minute woman's young champion was what orators term—'stamped,' or the fancy dolled—'dashed.' But the next instant the light flashed back to her eyes, and the colour to her cheeks, and she answered clearly:

'No! my weakened it, either! Heaven keep me from such narrowness of mind as would cause me to judge my whole sex by my inefficient self and my timid companions in the cabin!'

'You still think, then, that it is quite possible for women to compete with men, in navigation as in other things?' said Justin, with a questionable smile.

'Yes,' she answered, her cheeks still glowing and her eyes beaming—'yes! thank Heaven, one brave young woman has given me the power to answer "yes" to that doubtful question! Mary Patten!—the ship she was in was about to double Cape Horn, on its voyage to California; the captain, her husband, lay ill and delirious with fever, and one of the mates was nearly useless from his ignorance of navigation, and the other one was highly dangerous from his disposition to mutiny, and she had to contend not only with the frightful hurricanes and fatal water currents of that region, but also with an insubordinate crew, led on by the mutinous first mate, who wished to convert the merchantman into a pirate. What did she do? She put the first mate in irons; she suppressed the mutiny; and she, who had learned navigation from her husband as a mere pastime, carried the ship through all the storms around the cape, and up the Pacific coast, safely into the port of San Francisco. How did she do it? Ask the Omniscient! I do not know! for I am one of the inefficient ones, by whom, I tell you, I will not have my sex judged!'

How her bosom swelled, how her cheeks glowed and her eyes beamed in enthusiastic sympathy with that brave sister woman, who had borne herself so firmly under circumstances that would have tried the souls of the stoutest hearted men!

As Justin gazed on her, he saw that she was not indeed one of those inefficient women of whom she spoke. Though she might fail to keep her feet on deck in the first furious gale she had ever met at sea, yet let the time, the duty, and the occasion present themselves, and she would be brave enough to lead an army; firm enough to mount the scaffold; faithful enough to die for the right; yet he would not yield to what he considered her extravagant ideas of woman's rights and woman's right.

'I have heard of Mary Patten. She was a true heroine, but an exceptional one—one in a million,' he quietly answered.

'The opportunity was an exceptional one, you mean. Men never give women an opportunity of showing what they can do! Chance does sometimes—say once in a million of times—and then, lest the heroism of the individual woman who has been favoured by chance with the opportunity of showing what women can do, should reflect itself upon her whole sex, you call her an exceptional case—one in a million! Oh, man! when I reflect how well women have acquitted themselves—always acquitted themselves—in the few opportunities they have had for distinction, I am constrained to believe—heaven knows I am!—that women are capable of much higher things than they have ever yet accomplished, or men have ever dreamed of accomplishing!'

'There is one thing,' said Justin, with an air of profound conviction, 'in which women really do excel us.'

'Indeed?—really now?—and upon your honour?'

'Indeed!—really now!—and upon my honour.'

'And pray what is it in which you deign to acknowledge that women excel your lordly sex?' inquired Miss Conyers, ironically.

'In out-talking us!' answered Justin, solemnly.

'Oh, what a mean, miserable, little, manlike way of wriggling out of an argument!' exclaimed Beaumarie. And

'Oh, what a deal of scorn looked beautiful In the contempt and anger of her lip!'

'And in out-railing us, too, perhaps,' maliciously added Justin, with a smile and a bow, as he left his beautiful foe and went to join Captain MacKenzie, who had come on deck to take an observation of the sun with his sextant.

In a half hour Justin came back to her side and reported the result.

'We are within about two days' sail of the Cape of Good Hope, and if we are favoured with fair winds, we may be in as soon as we expected—on the last night of the old year.'

'I am glad to hear it, and I thank you for telling me,' said Miss Conyers.

And she arose to go down into the cabin to smooth her disarranged hair before going to their mid-day meal.

When she got down she found everything that had been disarranged by the gale made

tidy again by Judith; and her two companions were as comfortable and happy as it was possible for them to be on ship-board. They were playing with the kittens, and making the little animals leap and run after a ball of yarn tied to a string, which Mrs. Ely held in her hands and trailed and jerked before them.

Judith was watching the sport with great delight.

'Sure, ma'am, they're a deal of company themselves, the craythurs! Only if the sailors had found them out itself, wouldn't the bastes have pitched them into the say entirely!' she said.

Britomarte told her friends the good news—namely, that the captain hoped to reach the Cape of Good Hope before the morning of the New Year.

They were so glad of the information that they ceased playing with the kittens to hear all about it.

But Miss Conyers had no more to tell.

At dinner the captain confirmed the news, and at the same time informed his passengers that he should be obliged to remain three or four days at the Cape to deliver freight and to lay in a fresh supply of water and provisions.

The next two days were beautiful; the sky was clear, the wind light, and the sea calm.

The last day of the old year the passengers remained on deck from morning till evening, watching for land and for the approach to the Cape.

There was a man stationed aloft with a powerful telescope in his hand, on the look-out for land; but long before it was possible for him to see it, even with the aid of his powerful glass, our little party of missionaries imagined that they could discern it with their naked eyes. Every line of vapour on the south-eastern horizon they supposed to be the coast of Africa, and they called out to each other to announce the discovery; but when line after line of the imaginary shore melted away and made itself thin air, and nothing remained in sight but sea and sky, they began to grow discouraged.

'It is just the same with the Cape of Good Hope as it was with the Cape Verde Islands; the coast recedes and recedes before us as we advance, and it may be days and days before we reach it!' complained Mrs. Breton.

'Oh, but we get there at last, and we shall get more probably,' smiled Mrs. Ely.

And just at that very moment, when there was not the thinnest line visible to them that might be taken by the wildest fancy for land, the man aloft once more sang out the joyful words—

'Land ho!'

Up went Mr. Breton's telescope, but he could see nothing; his glass was not so powerful as that of the man on the look-out, nor was his position so commanding. He passed his telescope along to his companions, and one by one they tried it, but in vain.

'I don't believe there is any land in sight,' grumbled Mrs. Breton.

'Oh, yes; the man could not be mistaken, and we will see land presently,' smiled Mrs. Ely.

'Thrue for ye, ma'am. Ye'll see the coast av Cape Colony prisintly. Sure it's Fore-Top Tom himself that's aloft, and he niver make a mistake in his life, except when he made me a present av that squaking baste of a bird!' said Judith Riordan, who, having nothing else to do, was also on the look-out for land.

Judith prophesied truly. In an hour, with the aid of their little glass, they made out Table Mount, and in two hours they could see the whole line of coast, with its bold headlands and deeply indented inlets. A few hours more of sailing brought them to the entrance of Table Bay, under the shadow of Table Mount.

The ship dropped anchor just as the sun touched the horizon. The sailors were all busy with the rigging. The missionary party hurried forward to view the novel scene; but Miss Conyers, though belonging to them, walked aft, and leaned over the taffrail, to bid good-night to the last sun of the old year, as he sank beneath the wave.

Justin Rosenthal followed her, and stood by her side for a few minutes, watching in reverent silence the rich crimson light fading from the western horizon; and then he said, quietly:

'It is gone! Will you please to take my arm, and allow me to lead you forward? The captain will not send a boat on shore to-night; but to-morrow morning we shall all have an opportunity of visiting the colony. In the meantime, the view of the town and its vicinity, from this anchorage, is well worth looking at. Will you come?'

'Thank you—yes,' said Miss Conyers, and she permitted him to draw her hand within his arm, and take her forward, where all her companions were grouped together, gazing upon the new sights before them.

The view, as Justin Rosenthal had truly said, was well worth looking at. First of all, the bay into which they had put was vast enough to accommodate any number of ships, and, indeed, a very considerable

number rode at anchor within it. Before them lay Cape Town, nestled at the foot of Table Mount, whose perpendicular sides rose up behind it; while on either hand, like giant sentinels to guard the entrance of the port, stood the barren crags of Lion's Head and Devil's Peak. A little back from the shores were sunny green hills and shady groves, among which, half hidden, stood beautiful villas, built in the old Dutch style with flat roofs, and painted walls, and broad terraces.

The newly arrived voyagers remained on deck, gazing on this scene with never tiring in erest, until the short bright twilight of those latitudes suddenly sank into night, and the stars came out in the purple black heavens; and the lights shone in the streets and houses of Cape Town. Then they went below to the supper that had long been waiting; and afterwards they turned in for the night.

As soon as they were awake in the morning, the whole party arose and dressed, and hurried up on deck to take another look at the harbour, the shipping, the town and the mountain.

'So this is Africa!' exclaimed Mrs. Ely gazing in, open-mouthed wonder upon the scene before them; 'and only think—so long as we have been expecting to get here, now that we are here, I feel as if I was in a dream. Africa! Why, law, you know, though I always studied the map of Africa at school, and read about it in geography, I never seemed to realise there was such a place. It always seemed to me only like a place in a story, just as the Happy Valley, or the Cave of Despair. And I am sure it is as strange for me to be standing here, looking at it, as if I suddenly saw before me the Island of Calm Delight, or any other place that was only in a book. How queer! Africa!'

'I think your feeling is a more common one than would be generally acknowledged,' replied her husband. 'Until it is presented to our senses, the Real, like the Ideal, only exists, for us, in our imaginations.'

'What astounds me,' said Mrs. Breton, 'is to see here, at the most southern extremity of the most barbarous grand division of the earth, a town with houses, and a harbour with shipping, so much like the seaports of our own Christian and civilized native country. Why, law, only for that mountain behind the town, and those two great rocks to the right and left, that stand like Gog and Magog to guard the port, one might think we were in New York Bay, and looking in upon some of the old Dutch quarters of the city.'

'Yes,' said Mr. Breton; 'For harbour and shipping have a certain general resemblance all over the world. So also do seaport towns. And this town, with its Dutch style of building, does certainly resemble some of the older portions of New York. But it resembles still more the seaports of Holland, with canals running through the middle of all the principal streets, as you never see in ours.'

'Oh! canals running down the middle of the streets; how queer! Like Venice.'

'Oh, no, not Venice; for the streets of Venice are all canals—the walls of the houses rising straight up from the edge of the water. But here the canals only run down through the middle of the most important streets, and there are beautiful sidewalks, well shaded by lofty trees, before the rows of houses, each side. But you will see all these things when you go on shore. And there is the breakfast bell.'

While the others talked, Miss Conyers and Mr. Rosenthal stood side by side, perfectly silent, and letting their eyes rove over the sea and land. And now they turned and followed their companions into the saloon.

While they were breakfasting, the sailors were getting out the yawl boat, so that when they came on deck again they found it waiting. They made haste to prepare themselves, and were soon ready. The gentlemen handed the ladies carefully down into the boat. The captain, who was going on shore with his passengers, joined them, and the sailors laid themselves to their oars, and pushed off the boat.

'In African waters—only think!' said Mrs. Breton, who did not seem to be able to get over her astonishment at finding herself in such as to her, mythical place.

They rowed cautiously past British men-of-war, past East India merchantmen, past Dutch traders, past Chinese junks and the shipping of all nations that rode at anchor in the harbour, and then past fortificat ons, and past the custom-house, near which they landed.

As they brought nothing into the town but what they wore on their persons or carried in their hands, they had no business with the receivers of duty; so they went on into the town. First they found the usual crowd that day and night haunt the piers of seaports—only in this place the crowd was smaller as to number, and greater as to variety, than is commonly to be met with—for here were English, Dutch and Portuguese colonists, and Hottentot, Kaffir and other natives, besides a sprinkling of strangers and visitors from all parts of the world.

Through this crowd they went up a narrow street, and turned into a broad avenue beautifully shaded with poplar, oak and pine trees, and built up on each side with handsome houses in the Dutch style of architecture, having gaily painted fronts, flat roof and broad terraces.

Here the captain paused to point out to them the way to the South African College, and left them, and went in pursuit of his own business.

Mr. Ely and Mr. Breton had letters of introduction to Professor John of that institution, and thitherward the whole party turned their steps. It was a long but pleasant walk. The novelty of everything around them, and the strangeness of seeing so many old familiar objects of their own native land and home mixed up with so much that was new and foreign, beguiled the time so that they were unconscious of fatigue until they reached the college building.

The Professor was within and received them in his private study—a comfortable room, carpeted, curtained, and fitted up with chairs and tables, desks and book-cases, like any European or American gentleman's library.

Professor John was a pleasant little old man, in a dressing gown, cap and slippers. And very cordially he arose and welcomed the party to Africa.

'To Africa!' echoed Mrs. Ely, who seemed in a chronic state of amazement—'it seems like saying—"to the Moon."'

'Well, my dear young lady, it is rather an outlandish place, and in the same quarter of the globe as the Mountains of the Moon!' said the Professor, who was something of a humorist.

He offered them refreshments consisting of the rich Constantia wine of the colony, and biscuits, cold fowl, cake, fruit, and so forth. And when they had eaten and drunk and rested, he showed them over the college—into the library, museum, class rooms, refectories and dormitories. And when they returned to his study he sent a messenger to procure a carriage to take them around the town.

CHAPTER XVII.

A VILLA IN CAPE COLONY.

'The shadowed by the silver tree, the fountain filled by the vine,
The orange sheds its yellow fruit from fragrant thickets near,
And flowery meadows from the dews approach till they meet the sky.'

From the South African College they drove out of town in the direction of the Wynberg Hill, to a beautiful villa in the English style of architecture, closely shaded with the brilliant native trees of the colony grouped with the imported old familiar trees of the mother country; and surrounded with gardens laid out in the English fashion. To the owner of this lovely home, the Rev. Mr. Burney, of the Presbyterian Church, Mr. Ely bore letters of introduction for himself and his whole party. And when their carriage had rolled through the beautifully ornamented grounds and up the poplar-shaded drive to the front of the villa, he left his companions in their seats and alighted and went in to present his credentials to the master of the house.

He was welcomed by Mr. Burney with that cordial hospitality which must be peculiar, I think, to colonists all over the world; but is perhaps most peculiar to those of the Cape of Good Hope.

He insisted that Mr. Ely should immediately bring in his whole party; and to enforce the execution of his plan, he went with that gentleman to the carriage and put his head in at the window and shook hands with all its occupants, and then had them all out of it and in his own drawing room before they knew what they were about.

Then he sent for his wife and daughters and presented them to his visitors.

'Mrs. Burney, Miss Burney, Miss Mary Burney.'

And then he presented his visitors to his family.

'The Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Ely, my dears. The Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Breton. The Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Rosenthal.'

—'Miss Conyers—the young lady's name is Conyers,' whispered Mrs. Breton, in a panic.

But of all the hurried low-toned explanation the unfortunate host heard only the names, and he corrected his mistake and made matters worse by realaiming:

'Bless my life and soul, yes! I beg your pardon, sir and madam.' Then turning again to his family group, he presented the young people over again as—'My dears, the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. Conyers.'

Britomarte's cheeks were scarlet. But Justus smiled with perfect self-possession and some little amusement as he shook hands all around, saying as he did so:

'I am not so happy. The young lady by my side is Miss Conyers; but it is not the fault of Justus Rosenthal at your service, that she is so.'

The good minister utter d another:

'Bless my life and soul!' And then he laughed and stretched forth his hand, say-

ing: 'But you see the mistake was so natural on my part. Here is a party of gentlemen on the way to India; don't know a one young couple and here is another young couple; and here are two more young people, and what so natural as to take them for a third young couple? But I beg your pardon, Miss Conyers, I am sure!'

'And he won't do so no more!'—will you, papa dear?' said Miss Mary, who seemed to be the privileged romp of the family.

'Indeed I will not; until you give me the right,' laughed the minister.

Miss Conyers responded by a grave, severe bow; she could not easily recover her equanimity.

But Justin begged to assure his host that he, for his part, suffered under no sense of injury.

Mr. Barney laughingly replied that he should imagine he did not.

And so the affair passed off.

When the party were all seated comfortably in the easy chairs and on the sofas of the drawing-room, that looked so exactly like their drawing-rooms at home that they could almost have supposed themselves transported by magic back to America, their host, with his hands upon his knees and his head bent eagerly forward, said:

'Your ship will be in port home some days, I hope?'

'No. We sail on Saturday.'

'Bless my life and soul!' exclaimed the good man, who was given to imploring benedictions upon his own head. 'You sail on Saturday, and this is Thursday. Well, well! you must make the most of your time and we must make the most of you. You must remain with us while the ship is in port. Not a word now! I will take no denial—'

'But,' said Mr. Ely, 'we did not come pre——'

—'I know all about that,' interrupted Mr. Barney. 'Go at or dinner you can drive back to the town and go on board the ship and look up anything that you have left lying about; and bring away anything you or the ladies want for your convenience. But as for the ladies, they needn't go back at all; they've had enough of ship-board, I should think.'

'But indeed—' began Mrs. Ely, 'we are not prepared to re——'

—'Of course you are not, my dear young lady. You haven't brought your well-packed travelling bag from the ship; but what of that? Your husband can bring it for you; or else my wife and daughters can serve you and your friends with what you require.'

'You indeed, I am sure we can,' said Mrs. Barney.

'And now do let us show you to a bedroom where you can lay off your bonnets and shawls and be easy and make yourselves at home. You must be all so tired of that ship,' said Mrs. Barney.

'I wish I could have a chance of getting tired of a ship! which I don't believe I should do so very soon. I should so like a sea-voyage!' exclaimed Miss Mary.

'Will you go to me now?' inquired Miss Barney, rising.

'Yes, do, my dears,' insisted Mrs. Barney.

The two young wives looked at their husbands for direction—a mark of homage to their liege lords which the men later immediately resented by promptly rising to follow Miss Barney from the room.

'Yes, do so, my love, since our kind friends make a point of it,' said Mr. Ely. And as Mr. Breton also seemed to the proposal, the two ladies arose to leave the room in the wake of Miss Conyers and her conductor.

'Please be sure to bring me my dressing-case; and don't forget to look up all our things. We don't know who may get on board and find the way into the cabin,' whispered Mrs. Ely to her husband.

'I haven't got much to bring away, or much to look up,' said Mrs. Breton to her 'natural enemy;' 'but you may bring me my combs and brushes, dear,' she whispered.

'Can I do anything for you in that line, Miss Conyers?' inquired Justin, with a droll smile.

'No, thank you. I shall accept Miss Barney's kind offer to supply my wants,' answered Britomarte, with a bow, as she passed on with her young hostess.

The three gentlemen then took a temporary leave of the Barneys, and entered the carriage to return to the town to go on board the ship; not only for the purpose of bringing off what they required for themselves and party, but also to inform the captain of their plan of spending their time while in port at the 'Poplars,' as the Rev. Mr. Barney's villa was called.

The three ladies, in the while, followed Miss Barney, who conducted them up two flights of stairs to a large hall in the third storey, from which four doors opened into four spacious bed-rooms, all fitted up in the style of American or English chambers. She showed the three ladies into three separate rooms, and explained that the fourth room was occupied by herself and

her sister, and that her parents and her two brothers had the apartments on the second floor below them.

'But though I put you into separate rooms,' she said, 'you need not confine yourself to them. This hall, upon which they all open, is common ground, and a pleasant place to sit or walk in.'

'And you and your lively sister are very pleasant companions, I know,' said Miss Conyers, with a smile.

'Thank you. I am glad you think so,' answered Miss Barney, cordially. 'It gives me hope that you will let us see a great deal of you in the short time you remain with us.'

And then, with the delicacy of true hospitality, she made an excuse and left them to themselves.

They did not confine themselves each to her chamber, you may be sure. They had had enough confinement on ship board. Mrs. Ely was especially restless, flitting out of her room and into Britomarte's every minute, exclaiming:

'Oh, Miss Conyers, dear, how nice to live in a house again, if it is only for two days!'

'Oh, [illegible] what a delightful thing to be able to sleep in a good wide bed once more! If it is only for two nights!'

'Oh, [illegible] only think of being in Africa—[illegible] Africa!—and having a nice house with [illegible] carpet, and Brocatelle curtains, and spring mattresses, and Marseilles counterpanes, and [illegible] pillow cases—all in civilized style! Isn't it delightful?'

When Mary Ely was not flitting in and out, Martha Breton was rushing to and fro, complaining indiscreetly:

'Oh, dear me, how queer it does feel to be walking on a floor that keeps still while it was laid! But do you know, I have been so long used to walking on the rolling floor of the cabin or the deck of that tippy old ship, that I am in danger of falling and breaking my neck every minute on this stationary floor? Now see, I either lift my foot too high and almost dislocate my knee, or else I set them down too low, and strike the floor with a bump that jars to the very top of my head! It is awful, trying to get used to walking on a motionless floor after being accustomed to a rolling deck!—And oh! Britomarte, do you think there is any danger of the horrid natives rising and massacreing us all while we stay here?' she inquired, anxiously.

'No: the smallest, I do assure you,' answered Miss Conyers.

In a little while Mary Barney came to show them down into the drawing-room, where, in the course of an hour, they were joined by the gentlemen of the mission.

After the early three o'clock dinner, as their time was so short, and they had to make the most of it, Mr. Barney ordered his carriage and pair, and also two saddle-horses, and took his guests for a ride and drive around the beautiful environs of Cape Town. Mrs. Barney and the three missionary ladies and Mr. Ely rode inside the carriage, Mr. Barney on the box beside the coachman, and Mr. Breton and Mr. Rosenthal on horseback.

They went to the foot of Wynberg Hill, where they all alighted and began to ascend the hill by the newly made spiral walk that led to the summit, where they stopped to view the magnificent panorama spread out beneath them—the harbour and the town, Table Mount, Lion's Head and Devil's Peak, on one hand, and the great sandy plains stretching away to the distant chain of mountains, on the other.

When they had got enough of this view they descended the hill by the same spiral walk, winding around and down its sides until they reached the bottom, where they found the carriage and horses still waiting.

'Now I could take you to our Zoological Gardens; but, in fact, you would see there nothing more than you have often seen in your own country—a wild beast show. However, we will drive there if would like it,' said Mr. Barney.

But his guests assured him that they preferred not to go. So they all returned to the Poplars, where the two young ladies had tea ready in the drawing-room, and where they found also the two young men of the family, who had come home from their place of business in the town, and who were now duly introduced to the missionary party.

They all passed a very delightful evening, especially when Mrs. Ely let out the secret of Britomarte's gift for dramatic reading.

Mr. Barney brought out his Shakespeare; and Miss Conyers, as ever, delighting to exercise her talent, and to please her friends, selected the play of Macbeth, which she read with great power and effect.

That night, when all the ladies had retired to rest, and the two missionaries had followed their wives to their rooms, Mr. Barney and Mr. Rosenthal remained alone in the parlour.

'What an amazing dramatic talent your young friend has,' said Mr. Barney, reflectively. 'I had rather hear her read a

tragedy than one is performed, even if it were proper for me to witness such a performance; for, even in the best managed houses, I suppose, one would only get two or three parts well acted; whereas, when one reads, we have every part equally well rendered! What a voice she has; how powerful; how full-toned and varying it is; how it rolls and rebolls in thunder in some of the passages; how it vibrates and melts in pathetism in others. And her face! What a marvellous command of countenance she has! In reading some of those passages in the part of Lady Macbeth, she is absolutely appalling. Who was her teacher of elocution?'

'Nature, I think,' replied Justin Rosenthal. 'She had, indeed, a professor of elocution, who trained her in some of its elements; but she so far excels her master, or any other master I ever knew of, that he can scarcely claim credit for her proficiency.'

'If now I had any very strong personal interest in that singularly-gifted young lady, I should warn her of this power she possesses.'

'Why?'

'Lest it should tempt her into that field—the most fascinating and perilous field, where it can be the most displayed.'

'You mean the stage?'

'Yes.'

'Your misgivings are groundless. She will never be tempted to exercise her talent in that way. She is going out as a missionary to Cambodia.'

'Ah, to marry and nurse some bilious brother of ours, I suppose.'

'No, not to marry any one there.'

"Then, perhaps, you are the happy man. If so, I congratulate you with all my heart; for you will have a very beautiful and brilliant young creature for a wife. But, bless my life and soul, what a droll mistake that was of mine, to be sure! calling you two Mr. and Mrs. Rosenthal, and then, to make matters worse, trying to correct my error by calling you Mr. and Mrs. Conyers!' said the old man, laughing at the recollection of the joke.

'I repeat, that I could not feel myself very much aggrieved by that mistake. But I should advise you, Mr. Burney, that I am not the happy man you take me for,' said Justin, rising, as if to break up the conversation.

'Well, well, not yet perhaps, but you will be; it is easy enough to see that! And now you want me to show you where you are to sleep. Well, come along,' said Mr. Burney, taking up a bed-room candle.

And Jus in followed him; and ah! how his heart bounded, in response to the confident prediction of the old colonist. He himself believed that he should eventually become the 'happy man' he aspired to be; but he was not the less delighted to hear his own secret convictions confirmed by another, who might be supposed the old and experienced to have his judgment misled by fancy.

Our little party of travellers did not wish to lose one hour of the short and precious time in which they had to enjoy all that was possible in this strange and pleasant land. So they arose early in the morning, and issued almost simultaneously from their chambers out into the common hall, upon which their doors opened. After exchanging the greetings of the morning and congratulating each other upon the glorious day before them, the next mutual question of course was:

'How did you rest?'

'As for me, I didn't rest so very well! I missed the motion of the ship, and seemed to want somebody to rock me to sleep,' said Mrs. Ely, laughing.

'Well, dear, we will see if Mrs. Burney has got a big old cradle put away somewhere in her lumber-room, and we'll beg the loan of it for you, and I will rock you to sleep to night,' said her husband, with mock solemnity.

'For my part, the rocking of the last three months has made such an impression upon my nerves of sensation that I believe I shall feel myself rocking for the remainder of my natural life! I am sure the bed swayed from side to side when I laid down, just as the floor rises and falls with me even now!' said Mrs. Breton.

At this moment Miss Burney came out of her room and greeted the guests, and invited them down into the breakfast-parlour, where the morning meal was ready, and where the remainder of the family awaited their visitors.

Mr. Burney advanced and shook hands with the whole party cordially, while Mrs. Burney, bowing and smiling all around, prepared to make the tea.

'What is the programme for to-day? You must make the most of the time, you know,' said Mr. Burney, when they were all seated around the table.

'We were thinking of visiting the schools. I am informed that the provision for education is very liberal and, indeed, munificent, and that the institutions of learning here are among the very best of their kind,' said Mr. Ely.

'Well, yes; we may visit the schools if you please, but I warn you that schools are very much alike all over the world, and ours

do not differ materially from other[illegible] are some objects of interest, however[illegible] you can not see out of the colony. [illegible] Mount, for instance. Suppose this [illegible] we take a drive to the base of Table M[illegible] There are some curious specimens of Cape vegetation to be seen in that vicinity,' proposed Mr. Burney.

The ladies immediately cast their votes in favour of Table Mount.

And directly after breakfast Mr. Burney ordered the carriage, and the party went to prepare for their drive.

Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Burney was at leisure to go out this morning; but Miss Burney accompanied the party, who set out in high spirits—all the ladies riding inside the capacious carriage, and the three gentlemen on horseback.

'How pleasant is the motion of a carriage rolling along through these shady roads, after the motion of the ship,' said Mrs. Ely.

'Yes, but I feel the motion of the ship always and everywhere! even now and here,' said Mrs. Breton.

'Is that the silver tree?' inquired Mrs. Conyers, referring to a gigantic tree that towered above all the other trees of the woods through which they were driving, whose light, shining, and delicate bluish-green leaves glistened in the sun as if they had been really silver-frosted.

'Yes, and it is much the largest tree we have. It grows to an enormous size in some parts of the colony. We have some on our place, but they have not yet reached their full maturity.'

'Oh, what a splendid bird, do look!' exclaimed Mrs. Ely, in delight, pointing to a brilliant creature that was balancing itself, and trimming its plumage, upon a sapling near them.

'It is the scarlet flamingo, one of the handsomest birds we have,' said Miss Burney.

'That is the protea cynaroides, I suppose,' said Miss Conyers, indicating a strange specimen of Cape vegetation that grew on the side of their road, and bore a variegated flower as large as a wash basin.

'Yes, and I believe it is found nowhere else on the face of the earth. And the nearer you get to Table Mount, the more you will see. They grow in great abundance there.'

At this moment a scream from Mrs. Breton drew every one's attention towards her.

A Cape monkey had leaped from the trees on one side of the road, chattering, upon her shoulders, and then, with a second leap, [illegible] the distance to the bushes on [illegible] side.

[illegible] no harm done, and her com[illegible] laughed.

[illegible] he only took the liberty of making [illegible] shoulders a half-way station to break his journey across the road,' said Miss Burney.

'Then I wish he hadn't done it! frightening me out of my senses! I'm sure I thought it was a wild cat!' said Mrs. Breton, half crying.

'We've no wild cats here. But lest you should be frightened again, we will have the carriage closed, if you like.'

'Oh, I should like, please! A panther might be leaping on my back to break his journey across the road the next thing!'

'Not likely, the wild beasts of prey retire before the settlements, you know; we have few or none in this vicinity, and they are never seen by day. Even this monkey I fancy to be a tame one belonging to some of the colonists.'

'But I thought that lions, and panthers, and hyenas, and all sorts of horrid beasts, abound in the colony?'

'So they do, but they are farther back towards the island. Shall I have the carriage shut up?'

'Oh, no, if you are quite sure that we shall not have a wild cat or a hyena, or something of that sort, leap into it.'

'Quite sure,' laughed Miss Burney, and they went on as before.

Arrived at the base of Table Mount, they alighted, and were joined by the gentlemen, who leaped from their saddles to attend them. And then they began their ramble through the wild and beautiful oriental thicket that clothed the sides and base of the precipice.

'What magnificent plant is that with the splendid crimson flowers?' inquired Mrs. Ely, pointing to a tree-like shrub with flaming blossoms, that seemed as if it almost kindled a fire among the trailing green herbage that fringed the steep.

'It is the red-flowering, arborescent aloe. You will see a great deal of it here,' said Miss Burney, as they walked on.

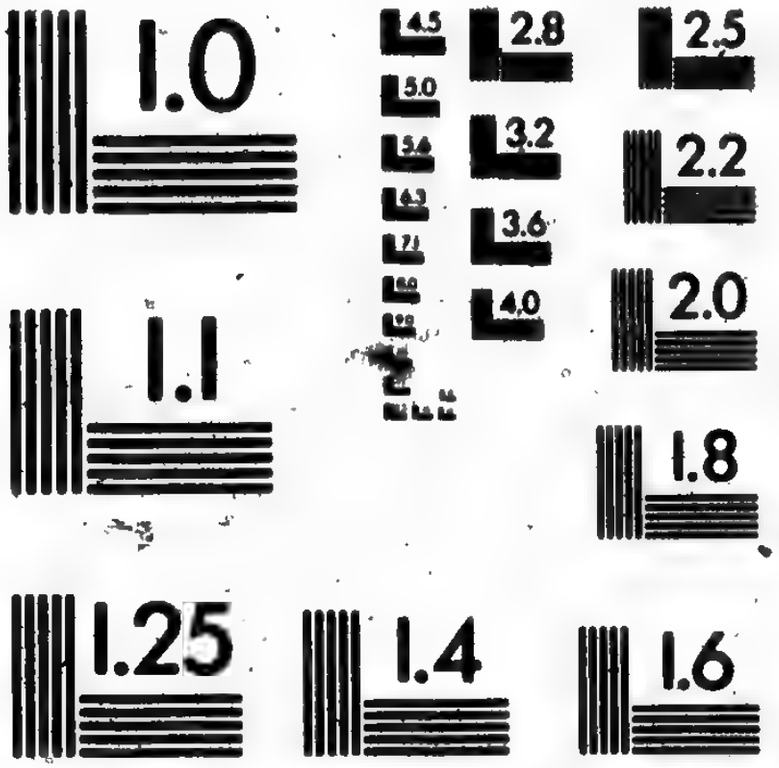
'And this strange pointed flower, that looks like a vegetable star-fish?' inquired Mrs. Breton.

'It is the stapelia, and belongs rather to the sandy plains than to this region,' replied their guide.

'What amazes me,' said Mrs. Ely, 'is to see growing wild here, on the sides of Table Mount, so many of the choice garden flowers we cultivated with so much care at home—here is portulaca, petunia, gladiolus, jessa-

MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



APPLIED IMAGE Inc

1653 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14609 USA
(716) 482 - 0300 - Phone
(716) 288 - 5989 - Fax

mine, cactus, and, oh! how many geraniums!'

'Because many of them came originally from this country, and many others are indigenous to other countries,' answered Miss Conyers.

'There! there, I declare, is a beautiful scarlet creeper! Oh, that looks so like the window at home!' exclaimed Mrs. Breton, stooping to gather the flower, when, with a piercing shriek, she sprang at least three yards from the spot, and stood trembling and white.

And well she might! For when her companions saw that she could not speak, but continued to point in one direction, they looked, and discovered, to their horror and amazement, the hooded head and ringed eyes of the deadly cobra, reared and gazing from among the innocent flowers!

In an instant they realized what her danger had been, but so paralyzed were they all by the sight of the fatal reptile, that no one moved until Justin Rosenthal, taking from his pocket a small toy of a revolver, levelled it at the motionless snake, and with true eye and steady hand, drew the trigger and fired.

Instantaneously with the flash and the report, the snake sprang into the air, twisted over and over, and dropped, a writhing, harmless mass, upon the ground.

'Thank heaven!' said Miss Burney, taking a long, deep breath of relief.

'Oh, let us go home!' plead d poor Mrs. Breton, who seemed to be booked for all the frights, and was now sobbing hysterically in her husband's arms.

'Yes; let us return for her sake; she is really unfitted by this shock to go farther,' said Miss Conyers.

And while Mr. Breton supported his wife on to the carriage, and the other members of the party followed in their wake, Britomarte walked deliberately back to the place where the writhing reptile lay and took it up by the end of its tail and held it up to view—not dead, but powerless. She contemplated it for a moment, and then she handed it to Justin, saying:

'Do you scalp your enemies as well as kill them, Mr. Rosenthal? Whether you do or not as a general custom, I think that you had better preserve this trophy and send it to your father. The cobra-di-capella is a very rare curiosity even in museums, and Dr. Rosenthal is a collector of such objects.'

'And would value this very highly. I thank you for suggesting it, Miss Conyers,' replied Justin, taking the serpent from her hand, and thinking within himself—'Mr. Burney was right after all.'

He laid a large silk handkerchief down on the ground, dropped the reptile into it, tied the corners together and took it up in his hand, saying—

'I must keep the creature out of Mrs. Breton's way. The sight of it would throw that heroine into fits again.'

When they reached the spot where the horses and carriages had been left, Justin went first and tied his prize to the side of the saddle; and then he helped Miss Conyers into the carriage, where her companions were waiting for her; and lastly he mounted his horse, and joined his comrades, who were riding on before.

They reached the Poplars in good time to dress for dinner—which dressing, with our ladies, consisted simply in washing their faces, and brushing their hair, and shaking the 'rumples' out of their gowns.

A glass of cordial, and a rest on the sofa for a few minutes, restored Mrs. Breton's equanimity, and enabled her to appear at dinner with composure.

There, the adventure with the cobra-di-capella was told; and, to the surprise of our little party, made much less impression than they had supposed it would.

'That is the first one that I have heard of being seen this season,' said the old gentleman. 'You must not think we stumble over cobras every time we walk out. No, indeed! We do not see more than half a dozen in the course of the hot weather.'

'Good gracious!' exclaimed Mrs. Breton; 'the idea of living in a country where they meet with deadly venomous snakes half a dozen times in a summer, and think nothing of it!'

After dinner, as the gentlemen still hankered after a sight of the schools, Mr. Burney undertook to be their guide, and set out with them on a tour of inspection of all the seats of learning, high and low, to be found in Cape Town.

Meanwhile the ladies were, at their own request, supplied with writing materials, and retired to their rooms to prepare letters, to be left with Mr. Burney, to be sent to their homes by the first ship that left that port for the United States.

Britomarte wrote but one letter. It was addressed to Signora Adriana di Bercelloni, General Post Office, New York.

When the gentlemen returned, they brought with them Professor John, whom they had called for at the college, and also Captain McKenzie, whom they had met in the street. Both the professor and the cap-

tain stayed to supper. The Burneys had a fine piano, and Miss Conyers good-naturedly sang some of her best songs for the entertainment of her new friends. And the evening passed very pleasantly for all the company.

When the professor and the captain arose to take leave, the latter said—

'We sail with the first tide to-morrow morning. The yawl boat will be waiting for you at the pier from eight o'clock; and I would advise you to get down as early as that hour.'

His passengers promised; and he and his learned companion bowed themselves out of the drawing-room.

'My dear,' said Mr. Burney, turning to his wife, 'we have had the pleasant privilege to "greet the coming," and now we have the painful duty to "speed the parting guests." Let the cook know that we must have breakfast on the table at seven o'clock precisely. I will warn the coachman to have the carriage at the door at half-past.'

Mrs. Burney responded by a nod, and then said—

'It is eleven o'clock; and since our friends must rise so early in the morning, they should be permitted to retire now, in order to get their due amount of rest.'

And saying this, she rang for the bedroom candles.

And the visitors retired to their apartments.

'Oh, dear,' said Mrs. Breton, when they had reached the upper hall upon which their rooms opened—'Oh, dear, and oh, dear! This is our last night under a roof. To-morrow we shall be in the ship on the ocean, playing at leap frog with the waves again.'

'But our voyage is more than half over, thank heaven! and then again we have got over all the sickness, and it is so splendid to be riding on the ocean!' said Mrs. Ely.

There was no time for more talk, and so they disappeared within their own rooms.

They all arose next morning about half-past six; made hasty toilets and went down to the parlour, where breakfast was already prepared for them, and where the kind family was assembled to see them off.

Immediately after breakfast they took leave of their friendly entertainers, entered the carriage that was waiting at the door, and drove into the town and down to the pier.

The yawl boat was there; so nothing was to be done but to make up a little purse by small individual contributions, and give it to the coachman as a reward for his services, and then send him back with the carriage and their last compliments to the Burney family.

After which they all entered the yawl boat to be rowed back to the ship.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE HURRICANE.

'The skipper he stood beside the helm,
His pipe was in his mouth,
And watched how the veering flaw did blow
The smoke, now west, now south.

Then up and spoke an old sailor,
Who'd sailed the Spanish Main;
"I pray thee put into yonder port,
For I fear a hurricane."'

The boat containing our passengers was pushed off from the pier, and rowed rapidly past the custom-house, the fortifications, and the marine villas that fringed the shores, and through the forest of shipping that filled the harbour, and over the bright waters of the outer bay, to the side of their own fine ship, that still rode at anchor waiting for the tide.

The boat was brought to under the starboard gangway, and the chain ladder let down for the ascent of our party.

Captain McKenzie and Doctor Van Duyck stood on deck to receive them.

'Good morning; you are in good time. We are getting ready to make sail,' said the captain, cordially, as he extended his hand to assist Miss Conyers in her ascent.

'Thanks,' she answered, coolly, as she barely touched his hand in springing upon deck.

'It seems like t'ree mont' instead of tree day you have been away,' said the little Dutch doctor, offering the same courtesy to Mrs. Ely, who acknowledged his kindness with a smile, as she availed herself of his helping hand.

'Glad to see you, too,' he said to Mrs. Breton, whose head now appeared at the top of the ladder.

'Oh! take care! don't let me slip!' exclaimed that timid creature, seizing hold of the stout limbs of the little doctor, who took her bodily up and set her safely on the deck.

The gentlemen of the party, and then the boat's crew, followed, and finally the boat itself was drawn up, and made secure to the davits.

Our passengers went down into the cabin only to deposit their dressing boxes, travelling-bags and parcels, and then they returned to the deck, and went aft, and seated

themselves in the stern, to watch the sailors preparing to make sail. The deck was lumbered with boxes, bales and barrels, that had been taken in from Cape Town, and that had to be left where they were until the men should have time to stow them away. Now they were all as busy as possible getting up the anchor, setting the sails and adjusting the rigging.

All was soon ready, and with the ebb tide the fine ship spread her sails to the wind, and once more sailed out to sea.

The day was fine, the sky was clear, the wind was fair. Our passengers, refreshed by their three days' sojourn in the beautiful colony, and exhilarated by the brilliancy of the morning, were all in excellent spirits. Altogether, the re-commencement of their voyage seemed very promising.

'How different from the day on which we sailed out of Boston harbour! Then we were overcome with grief, which now, by the grace of Heaven, we have surmounted. Then the weather was horrible! the sky was as dark and gloomy and full of tears as our own oppressed hearts; and now the weather is lovely, and the sky is as bright and cheerful and full of smiles as our relieved spirits ought to be!' said Mrs. Ely.

'Ah, yes!' sighed Mrs. Breton, suddenly growing grave. 'That was a bad beginning, but it had a good ending. And the old proverb says, "A bad beginning makes a good ending." Now this is a good beginning, and may not the converse of that proverb also be true? May not a good beginning have a bad ending?'

'Oh, you incorrigible croaker, no! it will have a better ending,' laughed Mrs. Ely.

Our passengers remained on deck all the forenoon, watching the gradually receding coast of Africa until it had entirely disappeared.

At dinner they resumed their social intercourse with the ship's officers, from whom they had been separated for the three days, which the little Dutch doctor persisted in asserting to seem three months.

After dinner, as the weather was still delightful, they returned on deck, and sat in the stern watching—not the rise and fall of the blue and sunlit sea, under the blue and sunlit sky, for that had grown monotonous, and they had had enough of it—but watching the sailors hauling, lifting or lowering the boxes, bales and barrels that lumbered the deck. And lastly they watched the sun go down, in a perfect blaze of glory that illumined the heavens and the ocean in what seemed a conflagration.

'What a magnificent sunset! I never saw anything like it in all my life. And even now that the sun is out of sight, the refraction of light is so intense, that but for the deep richness of colouring, one might think it noon-day instead of near night,' said Mrs. Ely, who was standing by Miss Conyers.

Britomarte said nothing in reply. She was gazing on the glory of the sea and sky in silent breathless awe and worship. And when her feelings were so deeply impressed, she seldom expressed her emotions by speech. But as the glory paled and dimmed, her voice, low and tremulous at first, arose and swelled in full-toned melody, and almost unconsciously she sang the beautiful hymn:

'Fading—still fading—the last beam is shining;
Father in heaven, the day is declining;
Safety and innocence fly with the light—
Temptation and danger walk forth in the night.'

The hymn is a long one, and the music and words by turns slow and solemn or wild and appalling. By the time she had finished it, the last beam indeed had faded from the sea, and the stars were coming out in the purple black sky.

'There is the new moon!' joyfully exclaimed Mrs. Ely, pointing to the delicate crescent that shone like a diamond near the edge of the horizon.

'Oh, dear me! you have made me look at it over my left shoulder,' complained Mrs. Breton.

'What of that? You didn't twist your neck, I hope?' inquired Miss Ely, laughing.

'Oh, no; but I shall have no luck while this moon lasts, just for looking at it over my left shoulder.'

'Don't you think, my dear, it would be well to get rid of some of these heathenish superstitions before you begin to teach better lessons to the heathen?' inquired her husband, with a smile.

'I can't help it, James,' she answered, seriously. 'I never see the new moon over my left shoulder that I don't come to some grief. And so I am sure that I shall have no luck while this moon lasts.'

'No luck while this moon lasts. Then, my dear, you will have a terribly long run of ill-luck, unless the day of doom—when sun and moon shall pass away—should come much sooner than we expect it.'

The ringing of the supper bell put an end to the conversation, and they all went in to the table. That evening, being wearied, they all retired to the cabin, and turned in at an early hour.

Thus passed their days for the two weeks during which they had fine weather, and a fair, or nearly fair wind.

Then, when the moon was at the full, there were indications of a change. The wind gradually died away, or rose and blew in fi ful puffs, and sank again. The ship, with all her canvas spread whenever it could catch the faintest breeze, made little or no progress. The weather grew intolerably hot and oppressive. The sun blazed down from a cloudless sky with consuming fierceness. The ladies were driven from the deck to seek shelter from the burning heat in the deep shades of the cabin, where they remained all day, or, at least while the sun was above the horizon. After sunset they ventured upon deck to seek a breath of fresh air, which they very seldom found even there, for the atmosphere seemed oppressed with some deadly element that made it almost unfit for inhalation. And even the reflected light of the moon seemed to be reflected heat as well, and Mrs. Breton declared it looked as hot, and felt as hot, as ever the sun did in her own native clime.

The crisis came; the wind fell lower and still lower, and then the fitful puffs that had served to carry the ship forward a knot or two in an hour, ceased altogether, the sea sank; and the ship lay like a log upon the glassy sea, under the burning sky.

Day and night for nearly a week this dead calm continued with most depressing monotony.

'Oh, this is horrible! not being able to move an inch! it is as if we were doomed to remain here forever, or until we shall perish together,' cried Mrs. Breton, as the three ladies and the stewardess were alone in the cabin on the scorching afternoon of the seventh day of the calm.

'Troth, ma'am, it's yerself that allers looks on the darkest side, sure,' said Judith.

'But how long is this going on?'

'Faix, ma'am, the Lord only knows. I have heard tell—but I don't know for the truth iv it, that it sometimes lasts for three weeks at a stretch.'

'Three weeks! Oh, my good gracious alive! I should think all the timbers of the ship that are above the water-mark would warp and shrink, and that she would fall to pieces like an old tub out in the sun! Three weeks!' repeated Mrs. Breton, in dismay.

'Troth, ma'am, meself niver knew it to last over siven days. And the rest may be all a make-up of the saymen—the bastes! they're allers spinning yarns, as they call it, which manes—asking her pardon—just telling lies, itself!'

'And you never knew the calm to last more than seven days?'

'Troth no, ma'am, and hardly ever ha'f so long.'

'Well, but it has lasted seven days already.'

'Six, ma'am. This is the sivinth. And there's like to be a change, though it's odds you won't like the change when you get it, itself.'

'Yes I shall! Why shouldn't I? What next?' inquired Martha Breton, uneasily.

'Troth, ma'am, something as you'd like to change back again for a calm,' said Judith, gravely.

'Oh, my goodness! You don't—don't mean another gale!' exclaimed poor Martha Breton, turning pale with the memory of one gale and the dread of another.

'Worse nor that, ma'am. A gale is nothing if it's only a gale!'

'Worse than that! what do you mean?' cried the terrified woman.

'Just a hurricane, sure!'

'A hurricane! Heaven and earth! did you mean to say we shall have a hurricane?'

'I just did mane that same, ma'am. Sure these calms in these here latitudes allers breaks up in a hurricane,' said the relentless Judith, regardless that she was figuratively driving nails into the coffin of her hapless hearer, whose frame was quaking with terror.

'Raven of Heavens! then we shall all be lost!' gasped Mrs. Breton, on the very point of swooning.

'That don't folly at all, at all ma'am. Sure me and the ship hev been in many a storm together and we're naither of us lost yit,' said Judith, though she rather enjoyed the panic into which she had thrown her listener.

'But a hurricane! Oh, my goodness! how many ships I have read of being wrecked in a hurricane, and all on board lost!' wailed the poor dismayed creature.

'My gracious, Martha Breton! do try to be a little braver! There is no hurricane yet, and there may not be one; or if it comes we may not be wrecked; or if we should be, what of it! The worst that can come is death, and that must come to all sooner or later! Why, dear me! if I was sure there would be a tempest and a shipwreck in which all on board would perish, I could not be such a coward over it, though I love my life as well as anybody!' said Mrs. Ely, impatiently.

'Don't find fault with her. She is no more to be blamed for her extreme sensibility to danger than I am to be praised for my perfect insensibility to fear. You who are so-

forbearing with the faults of men, should be a little patient with the weakness of women,' said Britomarte, gently.

'What's that?' exclaimed Martha Breton, in a low, hushed voice, as she held up her finger to enjoin silence on her companions, and paused to listen to a sound that came at intervals.

It was like a huge, deep sigh, or moan, or sob, as if some great monster of the air or water breathed slowly and painfully from a vast distance over the sea.

'What's what?' demanded Mrs. Ely, shortly.

'Listen!'

The low, deep, distant sigh, moan or sob swept over the sea again.

'I think it is the wind rising. It certainly grows cooler,' said Miss Conyers.

'Let us go up on deck. The sun has been set this hour,' suggested Mrs. Ely.

The whole party assented, and they went up on the deck that was now as level on the sea as the floor of a drawing-room on the ground.

'Look at the sky! Oh, did you ever see such a colour?' exclaimed Mrs. Breton, hurrying aft toward a group of officers who were eagerly conversing in the stern.

The heavens indeed wore an ominous aspect. The sun had set, and every ray of his light had faded from the western horizon; yet the whole sky seemed to be illumined with supernatural light—a bronze-coloured glare that made the moon and stars pale and dim, and that was reflected by the sea, until the whole sphere seemed smouldering on the eve of bursting into a conflagration; while ever, at short intervals, came that low, deep distant sigh, moan or sob, across the waters. As if in sympathetic answer to this mysterious sound of distress, the ship began to creak, groan and roll. And the whole circle of the sea began to boil up into a white foam.

The seamen also were very active and busy. Some were reefing the top-sails; some were setting storm stay sails; others were closing the portholes; and others again were securing the fastenings of the life-boats.

'"There's something wrong abrewing,"' said Mrs. Ely to Miss Conyers, as they walked after Mrs. Breton, who had hurried to the stern where the anxious men stood grouped around the wheel-house.

'What is coming, Captain McKenzie?' inquired Miss Conyers.

'Not much, I hope, my dear young lady, but I would recommend you and your companions to go down into the cabin.'

Even while the captain spoke, the dull bronze coloured glare grew darker and darker, and in the gloom of the ripples of the sea gleamed in phosphoric light, and the air was filled with a sulphuric odour.

'Will there be a hurricane?' Miss Conyers was about to ask, but in pity to her frightened companion, Martha Breton, she forbore the question.

'Oh, take me down, please! I know there's something dreadful at hand; and I don't see my husband anywhere at all! Please, take me down!' pleaded poor Martha.

Miss Conyers would have much preferred to remain on deck to watch the coming of the hurricane that she felt was almost upon them; but in compassion to her trembling friend she drew poor Martha's arm within her own, and led her towards the cabin. They had scarcely reached the top of the ladder before the wind suddenly arose out of the northwest with a great blast, and then as suddenly fell, leaving the ship rolling from the impetus.

Miss Conyers hurried her helpless companion down the ladder and into the cabin.

'Oh, Britomarte, I know! I know! the captain and all of them expect a terrible storm! I saw it in their faces! and see how hard the sailors are at work making preparations to meet it! And only think, they have not even thought of supper, though it is past the hour! Not that I care for supper now! I am too frightened; but I know if there was not great danger, they would not forget it, or neglect to serve it!—and oh! what a blast was there!' cried Martha Breton, as another gust of wind suddenly sprung up and blew with great violence for a few moments, and then again as suddenly subsided.

'You had better let me help you into your state-room, where you can lie down on your berth and be quiet; and no doubt presently the stewardess will bring us some tea, which I will take into you,' said Miss Conyers.

'Go into my state-room and lie down? Not for the world! Goodness only knows how soon we may have to take to the life-boats! or how suddenly! And I would like to be ready!' said Mrs. Breton, sitting or rather dropping down upon the cabin floor, for the wind had risen with another furious blast, and the ship had given a sudden lurch that brought Martha Breton to her quarters sooner than she expected to come.

Mrs. Ely was now handed down into the cabin by her husband. And they were followed by Mr. Breton, who came down to look after his wife. Justin Rosenthal,

though in the constant habit of spending his evenings in the cabin, remained now on deck, to render all the assistance in his power.

'You had better all sit down upon the floor, and hold on by the pedestal of the centre-table, or you will be tossed about in this cabin like foot-balls,' said Mr. Ely, easing his wife gently down upon the carpet.

Mrs Breton was already there.

Miss Conyers seated herself in a low, deep arm-chairn, near the table.

Judith was squatted on the lowest step of the ladder.

And so the occupants of the cabin waited for the hurricane—waited, all except Britomarte Conyers, in fear and trembling. She, Miss Conyers, if she had not, as she said, a constitutional insensibility to danger, had something greater—a soul that rose superior to its alarms.

Meanwhile all on deck was anxious preparation to meet the danger. Some of the men were aloft, relieving the masts from everything that could cumber the action of the ship, or be reft away by the wind. Others again were clearing the deck from the lumber sent down from aloft. The captain, with two men, was at the wheel. The wind that had at first sprung up in fierce and fitful gusts now blew steadily, but with great and increasing violence, from the north-east, driving the ship furiously through the boiling waves. The sea, risen to a great height, dashed over the decks at intervals, carrying off all light matter that had been left there, and threatening at every return to wash off the crew. So strong and fierce was the wind, so high and heavy the sea, that it was all the man at the wheel could do to keep the helm.

It was an awful night, with the howling and beating of the wind, the roaring and dashing of the sea; the meeting of black, fire-charged clouds in shocks of thunder above; the meeting of black, fire crested waves in shocks of death below; the struggling of the brave ship with wind and wave for her life; the whole scene of terror now revealed in a sudden glare of lightning as by a general conflagration; and now swallowed up in the blackness of darkness.

The captain remained near the wheel; the officers were all on deck; and the crew at their posts of duty; no man thought of rest.

In the cabin, as on deck, no light was allowed to burn, and pitch darkness added to the horrors of the night. All the passengers, except Justin Rosenthal, who was with the captain at the wheel, and Britomarte Conyers, who awaited her fate with unmoved constancy, were prostrated with fear.

Mrs. Breton, afraid to stay in her state-room, had come out and thrown herself down with her face to the floor, and her hands to her ears, to shut out if possible the deafening noise—the mingled roar of wind and sea and thunder; and from this position she was continually rolled over and over with every turn of the ship. Her husband was seated on the floor near her, vainly attempting to soothe her fears and keep her still. Mrs. Ely also sat upon the floor, clinging for protection to the bosom of her husband, but continually jerked from her resting-place by the sudden pitching of the ship. Judith Riordan occupied her favourite position at the foot of the cabin ladder, but she had to steady herself by holding on to it with both her strong arms; while she constantly repeated a litany of the Virgin, the refrain of which always was:

'Star of the say, pray for us.'

Suddenly, amidst all the gloom and horror of the situation, there was a lively and ludicrous incident. The three kittens, excited and exhilarated by the noise and motion, rushed out of the spare state-room and began racing and chasing each other over the cabin floor—their light agile motions in no way incommoded by the rolling of the ship.

A glare of lightning through the companion way showed their skittish little figures suddenly to Judith, whose face as suddenly became a picture of consternation.

'Ah, ye born divils!' she exclaimed, ceasing to invoke the virgin so as to rail at the cats—'ye born divils, ye! are yez rejoicing and triumphing over the storm ye've' riz entirely? Och hone! that iver I should have brought the likes of ye here to bring us all to destruction itself! Ah! and bad luck to yez, I ought to have listened to the saymen sure, who knowed the ways iv yez betther nor meself. Whisht! 'scat! get out iv me way, thin, ye divil's imps! Sure and I'd hand yez over to the saymen thimselves to throw into the say, only they'd be throwing meself in afther for bringing yez at all at all! 'Scat, thin, ye bastes!'

She finished by throwing first one shoe, and then the other, with such good aim at the luckless little animals, that they scampered back into the spare room and hid themselves.

Through all this scene of mingled deadly peril, awful fear and strange absurdity, Britomarte sat on a lower chair, holding fast

to the pedestal of the centre-table, which was a fixture. She too expected death, but she had nerved herself to meet it calmly and she sought to inspire courage into the panic stricken hearts of her companions.

As the night advanced the tempest increased in fury; the wind blew in fiercer blasts, howling and shrieking around the ship, as if all the accursed spirits in Tartarus had been let loose; had there been a square of canvas up, it must have been split to pieces; the very masts were bent like reeds. 'Alps on Alps' of waves arose and broke in death-dealing blows upon the deck; scarcely an hour passed in which some unfortunate seaman was not torn from his holdings and swept overboard, and the utmost precautions taken could not prevent the waves rushing into the cabin, to the unutterable horror of Mrs. Breton, who could only gasp and sob, while even Mrs. Ely exclaimed in affright:

'We shall be drowned! Oh, my heavens, we shall be drowned, drowned here in the cabin like blind kittens in a tub!'

'Ah, thin, bad luck to the kittens. I wish meself they were drowned entirely, for sure it was themselves as brought this hurricane upon us, as the saymen foretold,' exclaimed Judith, who had only heard, in the din, something about drowning and kittens. At every wave that came rushing in, Mrs. Breton went into a spasm, and Mrs. Ely cried out for mercy, though before the words had left her lips, the wave had left the cabin.

At last one, heavier than any that had preceded it, broke into the cabin, prostrating all its inmates, and then rushed out again.

'We are lost! Heaven and earth, we are lost!' cried Mrs. Ely, as soon as she could get her breath.

'Ah, be calm; we are immortal spirits; we cannot be lost! Think of that, and brace yourself to bear whatever comes! At worst it will be but a stormy passage to the other world!' said Miss Conyers, earnestly.

But her companions were unnerved beyond all hope of being strengthened.

And still, as the awful night deepened, the wind blew in more furious gusts, bending the masts like rods, the sea rose in higher waves, beating the ship with mortal blows; the thunder rolled in louder peals, and the lightning blazed with a more deadly glare. The ship was driven furiously through the darkness, and clear out of her course, and no one on board had any distinct idea of where she was.

So the night of horrors wore on.

'Oh, for daylight! oh, heaven, for daylight!' was the frequently aspirated prayer in the dark cabin. And, 'Oh, for daylight! oh, God, for daylight!' was the muttered prayer on the tremulous deck.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE ROCKS.

And ever the fitful gusts between
A sound came from the land;
It was the sound of the trampling surf
On the rocks and the hard sea sand.

The breakers were right beneath her bows,
She drifted a dreary wreck,
And a whooping billow swept the crew
Like icicles from her deck.

All things have an end. That awful night passed at last. Daylight came, slowly enough, through the heaped black clouds that rolled upon the heaving waves below and reached unknown heights in the sky above.

So darkly and gloomily came the morning, that it seemed not so much the dawning of the day as the fading of the black darkness. Night grew paler in the cabin, and the scared inmates could see in the waning darkness the wan faces of their companions rising up and down with the tossing of the ship.

And soon after daylight came that startling cry from the man on the look-out—that cry which our passengers had heard twice before on this voyage, and greeted with such joy—that cry which, as I said, is so often a sound of rapture or of despair, because it is a herald of life or of death. Ah, Heaven! it was now a knell of doom.

'Land ho!'

'Where away?'

'On her lee bows!'

'Thank Heaven!' fervently breathed Mrs. Ely, to whom the words conveyed no other idea than that of a good landing-place, where they could all leave the dreadful ship, and go on shore in safety.

Mrs. Breton lifted her prostrate head, and ventured to draw a long breath.

Miss Conyers never moved or spoke; too well she knew the deadly meaning of the words she had heard—'Land ho!' 'On her lee bows!'—when the ship was being driven before the wind at such a furious rate. Silent and breathless she sat, and waited for what should come next.

The voice of the captain rang clearly out above the roar of wind and wave:

'Luff! Luff!'

Too late! Another instant and the

doomed ship was lifted high on the top of an enormous wave, and carried forward and cast down with a tremendous shock that crushed and tore through all her timbers from keel to quarter deck, while she shuddered in death agony, impaled upon the horns of the hidden rock.

The passengers in the cabin were tossed up and thrown down by the concussion. They were jarred and shaken, but not seriously hurt. They quickly recovered themselves; and all the women except Miss Conyers were surprised and pleased to find that the ship, which had been tossing and pitching with such tremendous force for the last twelve hours, had now become nearly motionless.

But there was a great deal of rushing about and calling out among the men on deck, and Mr. Ely and Mr Breton started and ran up to see what it all meant.

'What is the matter? Have we landed anywhere? Oh, I suppose of course we have, but with what a stunning shock! It is bad enough when a river steamer strikes the pier too suddenly; but I declare this quite knocked the breath out of my body; and, besides, it was so unexpected! I didn't know that ships ever did come quite up to piers, and I did not even know we were near any place. What port is it likely to be, do you know, Miss Conyers?' inquired Mrs. Ely.

'I do not know where we are. We shall hear presently, I suppose,' replied Britomarte. But too well she knew where they were not—in any place of safety.

'Anyhow, I am very glad to be still. I know that,' answered Mrs. Ely.

Martha Breton, who was often frightened out of her senses by slight or imaginary dangers, was now quite cheerful in the midst of the real and appalling peril of which she was fortunately unconscious. She got off the floor and into a chair and began to smooth her disordered hair and dress and to call out to Judith to light the lamps, for though it was daylight, it was still very dark in the cabin.

'And you know we have to dress and go on shore,' added poor Martha.

'Ah, bedad, yes! sure we've got to go somewhere,' wailed Judith; but she got up and lighted the cabin lamps.

Meanwhile the commotion on deck increased. Suddenly again the captain's voice was heard above all other sounds.

'Launch the life-boats!'

And the rushing of many feet on the deck increased, mingled with the rushing of many waters around the ship.

'Lord betune us and harm, the life-boats! Mary, star of the say,' and so forth, and so forth, said Judith, wailing lamentations and muttering litanies.

'Are we to go on shore in the boats? I thought the ship itself had landed and touched the pier,' said Mrs. Ely, rising to go to her state-room to put on her bonnet.

'Well, I suppose we shall know what port we have touched sooner or later,' laughed Mrs. Breton, so glad to know that the ship stood still, and to believe that she was about to leave it for the shore.

Britomarte neither spoke nor moved. She knew, if her companions did not, that death was imminent.

The commotion on deck grew furious; it seemed almost as if a mutiny had sprung up among the seamen; too well she knew the meaning of that commotion; the crew were seizing the life-boats.

Again the voice of the captain was heard near the companion-way—

'Mr. Bates, see to getting the women in the cabin up on deck immediately—they must first be saved!'

'Saved! Heaven of heavens! From what? from what are we to be saved, Britomarte?' exclaimed Mrs. Breton, suddenly seized with terror.

Miss Conyers made no reply.

'How strangely you look, Britomarte! Your face is as white and as hard as marble. Oh, dear! what is the matter? What has happened? What are we to be saved from? Tell me! tell me quickly!' cried Martha Breton, wringing her hands in the extremity of distress.

'Oh, heaven, do you not know, then? The ship is wrecked on the rocks! The crew are leaving her in the life-boats!' said Miss Conyers, solemnly.

'Oh, no, no! Oh, don't say that! Oh, mercy!' screamed Mrs. Breton, wild with horror and despair.

'Be firm! For heaven's sake, be firm! Be a woman! Let these men see that we can brave death with the best of them!' said Britomarte, for you see the ruling passion was 'strong in death.'

'I don't care what they see. Oh, dear!' wailed the poor woman.

'What is all this fuss about?' cried Mrs. Ely, coming out of her state-room equipped in bonnet and shawl for her landing.

Before any one could answer her, there was a rush of many feet down the companion ladder, and several men entered the cabin, which was still too dark to enable the occupants to recognize the new comers. But Judith hurried out of Mrs. Breton's state-room with a lighted lantern, and then they

saw that the visitors were Justin Rosenthal, Terrence Riordan, and the two young missionaries.

Mr. Ely and Mr. Breton each rushed to the rescue of his wife.

Riordan hurried his daughter up the companion ladder.

Justin Rosenthal came to the side of Britomarte Conyers.

His face was very pale, but his voice was firm, as he hastily addressed her.

'The ship is a total wreck; the crew are about to abandon her, but they have consented to save the women. Let me take you to the life-boats.'

'I will go with you on deck,' she answered, calmly giving him her hand.

The other women of the cabin had been taken away by the men that had come for them.

Justin and Britomarte now followed them up on deck.

But, oh! what a scene of unparalleled horror and desolation met their appalled sight!

The sun was just struggling up above the horizon through masses of black and ragged clouds; the thunder and lightning had ceased, and the wind had died away, but the infuriated sea still foamed with rage, and rose in mighty waves, and roared above the ship, and fell in thunder over her decks. The ship, a mere shattered wreck, lay impaled upon the sharp rocks that had penetrated her keel; her bows were under water, and the waves dashed over her every minute, threatening to divide her amidships, but fortunately her stern was lifted high out of the sea, and wedged in a ravine or crevice of the rocks; heavy clouds and fogs rested on the tempestuous ocean, and no one could see where the land lay, if indeed there was any land near, or anything else but this chain of sunken rocks which had proved a reef of death to the fated ship.

The life-boats were all launched, and the crew were crowding into them.

Captain McKenzie stood, pale and stern, by the starboard gangway, seeing to the lowering of the women into the boats.

Mrs. Ely and Mrs. Breton were let down into one, and Judith Riordan into the other.

'Hand the other girleen down. Sure we'll save the women, the craytures! but as for the other passengers, faix they must take their chance along with the cowld ship itself! troth, they'd swamp us all if we was to have thim in here,' said Mr. Mike Mulloy, who, in this hour of confusion worse than chaos, and horror worse than death, had seized the command of the boat he was in.

On hearing these dreadful words that doomed their husbands to death, the two unhappy young wives began to scream and sob and pray to the crew; and to stretch out their arms in an agony of yearning to those beloved ones who had grown so dear to them on their voyage, and who now stood fixed and livid with despair upon the quaking deck.

Sick at heart at this sight, Miss Conyers turned away and walked as rapidly as she could up the inclined plane formed by the leaning quarter-deck, to the stern of the ship, where she stopped, looking down upon the 'hell of waters' beneath her.

Justin Rosenthal stepped hastily after her and stood by her side.

He stood for a moment silent, livid, and breathing hard, like an animal spent in a long chase; but in his eyes burned the intense fire of a love victorious over horror and despair. Then he suddenly seized her hand and nearly crushed it in his convulsive grip, as he whispered hoarsely, in a voice vibrating with the strong passion of his soul—stronger than death and the grave—

'Woman! spirit! we are on the immediate brink of eternity. I love you more than life in this world or the next. I love you more than all created things in earth or heaven. Tell me, in this last mortal hour! tell me before we part, Britomarte, that you love me!'

She looked him in the face and met his eye; she raised her hand and pointed upwards, as she answered in a low and thrilling voice—

'We shall meet there! I will tell you then.'

Her answer seemed to satisfy him; a ray of joy inspired and exalted his countenance; once more he crushed her hand in all too strong a grasp, and then he stooped and said—

'Come! your companions are all in the boats. Let me take you to them.'

'And you?'

'They are leaving me in the ship. No matter. Come!'

'Why do they leave you?'

'There is no room in the boats. Come, there is not an instant to be lost.'

'No; I will not enter the life-boat. I will remain with the wreck! I am not afraid of death at all!' she answered, with that iron resolution that he seldom ever saw in any other human being.

'But it is your duty to try to save your life! Heaven and earth! there is no time to argue this point. The ship is doomed.

the boats are leaving her. Come!' he rapidly and eagerly exclaimed.

'My mind is made up! I will share the fate of—the ship!' she answered, calmly.

'Then I will save you whether you will or not!' he cried, hastily laying hands on her.

'Stop! Don't dare to use force with me, Mr. Rosenthal!' she exclaimed, in a tone that made his hands fall from her person as if they had been struck off.

'But Heaven of Heavens! there is no time—not an instant of time for persuasion! The ship is sinking, I tell you!' he cried breathing hard.

'Then I will sink with—the ship," she persisted.

'But why? oh, why?' he demanded, quickly, scarcely able all the while to keep his hands off her. "Why? why?" he pleaded. Perhaps he hoped that in this last awful hour she would give him a supreme proof of love, and say that she was resolved to stay to share his fate. And perhaps to 'share his fate' was her strongest motive for wishing to remain on the wreck; but if so, she gave a weaker one; she said:

'Because I would rather at once sink with the ship, and meet a quick and easy death than take the chance of life amid the horrors of the life-boats. I will stay here, and wait my fate.'

'Then, before Heaven, I will not permit you to do so. You are mine by the right of the strongest love man ever felt for woman and I will dispose of my own as I please,' he exclaimed, throwing his arms around her, and lifting her up as easily as a child would lift a kitten. He bore her down to the starboard gangway, from which the last life-boat was just putting off.

'Stop!' he shouted. 'Men, seamen, some of you help to lower her down. Some of you take her as I let go her, Riordan!—Mullony!—hold up your arms.'

'Bedad, and meself will do that same. Let her go!' exclaimed Mike, standing up in the boat, and spreading his arms, to receive the form that Justin was preparing to lower down.

Too proud, or too fragile to struggle with superior force, up to this instant Britomarte had been quiet enough; but now, as he was letting her go, she turned with a half-suppressed cry and clung to his breast. But he tore her away from that hold, and dropped her into the strong arms of Mike Mullony. And then, stepping back upon the deck, he waved his hand for them to push off.

But oh! what a cry of unspeakable anguish came up from that boat, as Britomarte started to her feet, and stretched forth her arms yearningly, longingly towards him, exclaiming:

'Justin! With you! Take me! My beloved! my beloved!'

But he waved his hand to Mike to take charge of her, and turned away, white as death.

And it was an insensible form that Mike Mullony laid gently in the lap of Judith Riordan, who, with his own wife, Biddy, were the only other women in that boat; Mrs. Ely and Mrs. Brereton being on the other one.

While Britomarte lay still in that swoon, the boat was put off from the side of the ship. There were on board of her besides the crew and the women, the ship's doctor and the supercargo. And oh, in the midst of all their selfish anxiety for the preservation of their own lives, and their natural sorrow for their companions left behind to perish, what grief they also felt in abandoning the brave ship that had so gallantly borne them through such a waste of waters, the good ship that had so safely brought them through such tremendous storms, and that had only succumbed at last to the overwhelming power of winds and waves. Aye, they grieved remorsefully for her, as for a human being, deserted at her utmost need, and left alone to die.

When Britomarte recovered from the deep, death-like swoon that had held her life in abeyance, the boat was some distance from the ship. Her senses and memory returned instantly with her consciousness. Her first thought was of her lover—her first act to raise herself on her elbow, and with her eyes to sweep the horizon in search of the abandoned wreck.

Yes, there it was yet—distant and dimly seen—but certainly there, with the bows under water, and the stern wedged up in the crevice of the sunken rocks, and the sea breaking over it as before, while all above were dark and driving clouds, and all below foaming and heaving waves. The boat made very little headway over this heavy sea. Britomarte never took her eyes from the wreck. As she gazed on all that remained of the good ship, the sun suddenly burst through a black cloud, and some shining object on the stranded stern caught the rays and lighted up the wreck, like a star of hope.

"Save him! oh, God of Mercy, save him!" was the perpetual, though unuttered, cry of her heart.

'Spake to me, ma'am! Look at me,' said Judith Riordan, coaxingly. 'Don't be cutting your eyes out on sticks, and twisting your head around like Lót's wife, looking

afther that wreck. God save the craytures that were left behind, for we could do no thing for thim. Sure this boat wouldn't howld another soul. And the other boats were as heavy laden, and they left the ship first. And Lord knows what's become of them, for I don't see one of them, though troth, this fog to the landward swallows up every object, so it does. Ah, well thin, sure I have been praying for the poor sinners left on the wreck, and saying the litany of the "Star of the Say" ever since we lift thim there. And I'll aven go at it again.'

And Judith opened her little book and went at it again, muttering her litanies in a half audible voice.

Miss Conyers paid no sort of attention to her. She also was breathing earnest prayers for the salvation of one left to perish, while she strained her eyes for a sight of the wreck that was often hidden from her view by the rising of some great wave that threatened to carry it down, and as often loomed again through fog and spray to assure her of its continued existence.

'Oh, if it can but hold together for a few days, some ship may pass and take him off. Oh, if this dreadful sea would but subside. Oh, God have mercy on me and save him.'

Such was the constant burden of her thoughts and prayers.

There might have been others left on the wreck with Justin Rosenthal, but she scarcely remembered their existence, she thought only of him.

There was appalling danger surrounding herself and her companions in the boat, but she hardly cared for it; she suffered only for him.

Now, in this awful hour of doom, all the depths of her soul had been opened up, and she knew how strongly, how ardently, how devotedly she really loved him—how entirely he possessed her life.

Meanwhile the danger to the boat and its crew was imminent. The sea ran high and heavy, threatening every instant to swallow them up. The shore, towards which they were blindly struggling, was covered with clouds and fogs that might hide, for aught they knew, more frightful perils than those from which they were trying to escape.

What this shore was, no one had the least idea. For twenty-four hours before the storm, no observation had been taken and no reckoning made; and during the storm, the ship had been driven some hundreds of miles out of her course, so that no one knew on what rocks she was wrecked, or to what land this struggling boat was tending. The wind that had fallen at sunrise, now started up from another quarter, and blew directly off the fog-hidden land. This soon cleared away all the mist and revealed a rugged, rock-bound coast, more terrific in its aspect than the sea itself.

And the sea was growing darker and wilder every instant, and the boat was tossed like a cockle shell on the mad waves. They lowered the little sail to prevent the wind capsizing the boat, and they took to the oars and worked hard through the heavy seas along the shore, keeping as well as they could off the rocks, and watching for some opening to effect a landing.

One of the men had a pocket compass in his possession, and he took it out and set it, and saw that they were rowing northward.

All day long they worked hard at the oars, now carried onward by the great waves that had taken their direction from the preceding hurricane, and had not had time to change, and now driven back by the wind that blew off the land. So all day long they laboured, regularly relieving each other at the oars, and scarcely remembering the necessity of eating or drinking, until some one, I think it was the Dutch doctor, more hungry or more thoughtful than the rest, broke open a box of biscuits, and knocked off the necks of two bottles of rum, and distributed these refreshments among his companions. Some ate and drank while others laboured at the oars, and those whose hunger and thirst were satisfied, took their turns at rowing, to allow the oarsmen to refresh themselves.

When all had been strengthened and revived by food and drink, they worked on their way more cheerfully.

The sun was sinking down through a bank of clouds behind the land, when the boat's crew, still striving with the wild waves and rowing northward, saw that they were coming to a point that seemed to be the most northern extremity of some island.

'If we can once round that point,' said one of the sailors, 'we can get under the lee shore, and may manage to make a landing.'

'We must give it a wide berth, then, if we double it at all; the current around that point would suck the boat down to destruction in no time,' said another seaman.

They turned a little off and struck out to sea, meaning to give the point with its fatal maelstrom 'the wide berth' that their comrade recommended.

The sun went down and night gathered, and all was hidden from her view.

The boat's crew laboured on through the darkness of the night, the beating of the wind and the roughness of the sea, striving to round that point and get under the lee

shore of the land. But as night deepened the sky drew darker, the wind higher, and the sea wilder. It was a miracle that the boat lived from moment to moment, through several hours of that dread death-struggle, but while they strove for life, they expected only death. They made what blind preparations they could to meet the greater calamity, when the boat itself should be lost. The men were strong swimmers, as well as good sailors and good oarsmen. Some of these took the oars, while others fastened what life-preservers they had at hand on the persons of the helpless women.

Miss Conyers objected.

'Pray don't,' she said. 'It will be but a prolongation of the death agony. I had rather drown at once and have it all over, than beat about for hours in this wild, dark sea, and perish miserably at last.'

'Bedad, though, there's a chance of life at last! And sure I promised the masther to thry and save ye, and faix I'll do it? Help me here, Terry,' said Mike Mullony, and with the assistance of Terry Riordan he invested Miss Conyers with the life-preserver.

Not an instant too soon!

There came roaring onward an enormous wave that lifted itself high above and fell with annihilating force upon them. And in an instant the boat was gone, and the souls that had entrusted themselves to her were struggling in the mad sea.

Britomarte almost lost her senses in this shock of doom; and then she found herself in the wild waters, kept up indeed by the life-preserver, but dashed hither and thither, a helpless creature, at the mercy of the waves. And the night was appalling with the howling of the wind and the roaring of the waters and the shrieks of the drowning men and women!

In this scene of horror unutterable, Britomarte was beaten about, now driven out to sea, now dashed in towards the land; and through all one sublime thought exalted her soul above all the despair of the situation:

'We are immortal souls and cannot be destroyed! We are spirits and must live forever!'

At last she felt herself lifted up by an enormous wave, that, roaring as in triumph over its prey, bore her forward with great velocity and threw her with deadly force upon the shore; and with the shock she lost her consciousness.

CHAPTER XX.

LADY ROBINSON CRUSOE.

Oh, who can tell the unspeakable misery,
Of solitude like this?
No sound can ever reach my ear
Save of the passing wind.
The ocean's ebb and flow,
The forest in the gale,
The pattering of the shower,
Sounds—dead and mournful all!—*Southey.*

When Britomarte awoke from that deadly state of insensibility into which the tremendous mental and physical shock had cast her, her recovery seemed like coming back to life in the grave.

At first she did not know what sort of creature she was, or what state of existence she had come into. Neither memory nor thought was present with her. There was only a bodily sense of uneasiness, as the air again inflated her collapsed lungs, and the vital current resumed its flow through her damp, chilled and heavy limbs; and a moral sense of vague despair, impossible to analyze.

Instinctively she turned over and tried to rise; faintly she perceived that the palms of her hands were deep in the moist sand, and that they went deeper as she bore her weight upon them in her efforts to get up. And thus she discovered that she was on the ground.

At length, after several fruitless attempts she succeeded in lifting herself to a sitting position. And then she looked blindly around. But nothing was to be seen. All was dark as pitch. And nothing was to be heard except the thunder of the sea upon the coast—a sound that impressed her senses like some dimly remembered knell of doom.

She put her hands up to her head, and tried to struggle forth from this state of mental dullness and confusion. She tried to think and remember who she was, what had happened, and how she came to this Hades of darkness and desolation. In vain. As well might a new-born infant try to recall the events of its pre-existence, supposing it ever to have had one. With all her striving to come forth from chaos, she could only arrive at a dim, mysterious consciousness of infinite loss and eternal despair. Was she a disembodied spirit, then? Was this really hell? Had she come to it? And for what sin? No, but such spirits had not flesh and blood, as she felt too sensibly that she had.

What then?

The ceaseless beating of the waves upon the shore was a familiar and suggestive

sound, and troubled her with glimpses of memory that flitted in and out of her mind like ghosts in a graveyard.

It was a trifle that at last struck the electric chain of association, and restored her to herself. In her blind movements, she touched the inflated life-preserver that was fastened around her waist. And instantly, with a shock of returning life, the whole scene of the catastrophe flashed upon her memory. And she knew that she was cast away upon that dreary coast on which the life-boat had been struggling all day long, and far into the night, and on which it had finally been wrecked.

But whether this coast was a part of the main land or of an island; whether it was barren, or clothed with vegetation; whether it was uninhabited, or peopled with cannibals, she did not know and she did not care; or what deadly perils and cruel sufferings from the ruthless savages, or from protracted starvation might await her there, she did not know and did not care.

Instantly, with the flash of memory had come the knowledge of her one great sorrow, the loss of her lover and her beloved. Yes, in this awful hour of doom, Britomarte knew that she loved Justin with an earnestness that outweighed her hatred of his whole sex, and her devotion to the sacred rights of her own.

And the cry of her broken heart arose wildly on the dark air, amid the profound stillness of that strange land—a cry of bitter anguish, not for the fate of all her late companions, too probably perished in the sea; not for the feeling of her own horrible state of danger and desolation worse than death, but for despair at the loss of him whom she loved as only such souls as hers have power to love.

'Gone! gone! gone! Gone out of my way forever. Oh, this is the sorrow I dreaded worse than all others in this dark world, the only sorrow I ever really dreaded! life without him! And now he is gone forever, without one good word from me to let him know how I loved him! Ah, heaven, how I loved him!'

She wrung her hands and tore her beautiful hair, and then flung her arms on high, and cried out again, in the frenzy of longing—

'Justin! Justin! my lover! my beloved! Where are you? Where are you in all space? Are you near me? Can you hear me? Oh, is there no way of piercing the veil? of getting to you, or drawing you to me? Oh, come to me! Oh, hear me! I am telling you what no power could have ever drawn from my lips, Justin, while you were in the flesh! Justin, I am telling you how I loved you! I meant to have died with you on the wreck. I did, Justin. I did, though I would not confess I loved you. I meant to have died with you. Oh, why did you not let me? I cannot, cannot outlive you! Once you said, though you loved me so much, you could live without me, because you were so strong to suffer. But I! oh, now I know that I am not strong—I cannot live without you! and with the memory of my bitter unkindness to you! Justin! Justin! Oh, spirit! wherever you live in boundless space, speak to my spirit!'

She was indeed almost insane in her frenzy of grief, remorse and despair. And but for her deep religious principles, in her fierce anguish she would have run down through the darkness and cast herself headlong into the sea, that she still heard thundering upon the beach.

At last, exhausted by mental and physical trials, she sank down upon the ground and covered her face with her hands, and sat there in mute despair during the remaining dark hours of the night.

Day dawned in that strange place at last.

She lifted up her bowed head and looked around, feeling in the midst of all her misery the same sort of weird curiosity that causes a criminal on his way to the scaffold to look with attention at every object of interest in the range of his vision.

She saw the eastern horizon growing red behind a grove of tall, dark trees, but what sort of trees they were she could not tell. She arose to her feet and stretched her chilled and benumbed limbs, and took off her life-preserver. Her clothing had dried upon her; but it had a harsh feeling and a stiff set and a scent of the sea-water. Her hair, too, was loose and flowing; combs and pins had been lost in her recent battle with the waves. But she cared little for all these circumstances. A feverish thirst consumed her, and she walked on in search of some spring or stream of fresh water.

Day broadened over the unknown land, showing her an undulating and variegated country of hill and valley, plain and forest. The ground was covered with a coarse, rank verdure, and starred with many strange wild flowers. She merely glanced at these as she rambled inland in quest of a fountain to quench her burning thirst.

She walked some distance, fearless and careless of what unknown wild beasts or wilder men might intercept her progress and destroy her life. She often sank exhausted on the ground; and arose and re-commenced her journey, driven onward by the fiery

thirst that seemed to scorch up her very life-blood.

She came to that grove of tall dark trees behind which she had seen the sun rise in the morning. She found them to be a grove of cocoa-palms, and as she entered under their umbrella-like shades she was startled by a chattering over her head; and at the same time a missile was launched at her, that missed its mark and rolled at her feet.

She stooped and picked it up. It was a cocoa-nut. Raising her eyes at the same time, she saw a monkey perched in the tree above her, grinning and chattering with mischievous delight, and preparing to launch another nut at her. So she hurried from under that tree and out of the way as fast as she could. She carried off the monkey's gift with her, thinking that if she could not find fresh water, she would try to break the nut and drink the sweet milk.

She passed through the grove of cocoa-palms, and came out upon a gently declining plain that descended to the sea-side; so she knew that she must have crossed the narrow point of land and come out at the part opposite to that upon which she had been first thrown.

The upper part of this plain was covered with a thick growth of what seemed to be a coarse reed or bamboo, or what might be a species of sugar-cane. Britomarte had never seen the sugar-cane growing, and so she could not judge of it. She broke off one of the straight stems and placed it to her lips, and found it to contain a sweet juice, which she sucked with avidity to moisten her dried lips. But this only seemed to increase her thirst; and as yet she had found no fresh water, nor could she hope to find any so near the seashore; but with a fragment of rock she contrived to break the cocoa-nut and drink the milk. Still that did not quench her thirst; so she once more turned her steps from the sea and walked inland, though by another route than that by which she had come.

She entered another thicket of unfamiliar trees, which were not, however, cocoa-palms, but some unknown growth of that country. It was a picturesque thicket, with rocks and grottoes, clothed with luxuriant vegetation that grew in the crevices or wherever there was a root-hold of soil.

Suddenly she heard a welcome sound, the gurgling of some spring or stream of water. Following the sound, she came to a rock, from a fissure in which trickled a small, clear fountain. She hastily made a scoop of her hand, and caught and quaffed the precious liquid eagerly. And when she had quenched her feverish thirst, she bathed her face and hands, and dried them with her handkerchief, which she found safe in her pocket. While she was so employed she heard a sudden rush and whirr of wings, and looking up, she saw that a large flock of strange birds, of beautiful plumage, had made a descent and settled among the branches of the trees over her head. She watched them for a little while, and then passed out of the thicket, up upon a sort of table land that occupied the centre between the two shores of this long peninsula, as she supposed it to be. She walked on she knew not, cared not whither. Her burning thirst sated, and that physical suffering allayed, she again experienced heavy mental trouble. She walked on in a purposeless way, until, happening to glance downward she saw before her a strange looking little animal, in size and shape not unlike our young native pig. But on being observed, it started and scampered away. She went on and crossed the elevated plain and came to another thicket and passed through it and came upon the sea coast again. And here she sat down in the collapse of despair.

'It is only to wander here until I shall be massacred by the savage natives, or devoured by scarcely more savage beasts of prey, or else until I drag out a miserable remnant of existence, and perish slowly of famine and exposure, or of sorrow and despair, more terrible than physical suffering! How long will my strength hold out to live and suffer? Not long, I hope and pray, since it would be to no perceptible good end! Ah, well, it cannot last forever! "Time and the hours wear out the weariest day!" This is a dreary season; but this also will pass away. Time is but a small portion of eternity, and flesh but a transient condition of the spirit; I am an immortal spirit, living in eternity, and I cannot die or be lost; and sometime—somewhere I shall meet—ARN! Let me think of that and be strong!'

While thus she reasoned herself out of her despondency, and nerved herself to endure the horror and desolation of her condition—a horror and desolation not even to be imagined by any one who has only known misery in the midst of their own kind, in the reach of human sympathy—she suddenly heard a cry—a sharp, wild, piercing cry, between a howl and a shriek and a wail—a cry of anguish and defiance and ferocity!

She started and listened.

It was repeated again, wilder, higher, fiercer than before.

She hoped—she [illegible]—that it came

from some rapacious beast of prey, mad with hunger, which would set upon her and make short work of her and of the 'dreary season' she dreaded so much.

It was reiterated in almost human tones.

How intently she bent her head and listened.

'Ow-oo! ow-oo! ow-oo!' it screamed.

Human tones yet not articulate sounds.

'Och-hone! och-hone! och-hone!" it hallooed.

A sudden light dawned on Britomarte's mind. She knew that these last sounds were never heard off the 'Gem iv the Say,' except from some 'exile of Erin.' She immediately arose and hurried down the beach in the direction from which the cries proceeded.

And there upon the sands, dangerously near to the water's edge, lay the form of Judith Riordan. The life-preserver was still around her waist, but she lay flat upon her back, with her feet and hands raised, kicking and fighting the air, and her voice lifted and howling dismally. And with good reason; for she seemed unable to get up and run away from the spot, and the tide was coming in rapidly, and with every advancing wave threatening to overwhelm and drown her.

Miss Conyers hurried to her side, and knelt down, exclaiming eagerly:

'Oh, Judith! Judith Riordan! thanks to Heaven that you are saved!'

'Yis, thanks to Hivin, and small thanks to any of yez, laving me here be mesilf to be drowned entirely. And wh re are the lave of yez, at a'l, at all?' demanded the Irish woman, crossly.

'The rest of us? Oh, Judith, I don't know. You are the first one that I have seen! Oh, Judith! I fear—I greatly fear—that all the others have—'

A huge wave came rolling and roaring onward, breaking at their feet and showering them with spray.

'Ah, bad luck till ye thin, why don't you drag me out of this, yerself? Sure the next one will carry me off entirely!' screamed Judith.

'Oh! Judith, poor girl, can't you help yourself at all? Are you so badly hurt as all that?' inquired Miss Conyers, as she took hold of the woman's shoulders, and putting al her strength in the effort, slowly and laboriously dragged her a few feet from the water's edge and let her down a moment, while she, Britomarte, stopped to breathe and recover.

'Am I hurt so bad as that? ye ask me. Ye besther believe that same! Sure and I'm thinking ivery bone in me body is broke, so I do! Ah, bedad, here comes another say. Sure if I'd been left where I was, it would have took me off entirely. Och! drag me further out iv this——'

Even while she spoke, the advancing wave broke, and tumbled down, a shattered avalanche of water, at their feet, covering them with a shower of spray.

When it had fallen back, Britomarte once more took hold of her companion, and with painful efforts succeeded in dragging her still a few feet further on, where she was safe from the tide.

'And now let me see where you are hurt, Judith,' said Miss Conyers, first taking off the life-preserver from the woman's waist, and then unfastening the clothes to proceed with the examination.

'Judith,' said the young lady, after a very careful investigation, 'I cannot perceive that there is any bone broken, or any joint dislocated, in your whole body. Still, there may be some inward injuries. Where do you feel pain?'

'Sure, all over me.'

'Well, that is more hopeful than if you felt acute pain in any particular spot.'

'Sure, it's iviry joint is out iv joint, and iviry bone broke!'

'I really think, Judith, that you are a great deal more frightened than hurt. How long had you been lying here when I found you?'

'Divil a bit do I know! Last thing I rimimber, whin the boat went down, I fighting with the say, and a great wave rised me up as high as the sky and hev me down there; whin I thought sure the world had come to an ind; for whin I struck the beach itself, I saw the hivvins was all on fire, and thin all was darkness and nothing. And sure I knowed no more till the say waked me up this morning, dashing spray intil me face! And I found mesilf here, God betune me and harrum; and not able to move, and the tide coming in to dhrown me!'

'You kicked vigorously, Judith. Believe me, you are whole and sound, skin and bone. I can well believe that you have been severely shocked by the concussion, and that you feel stiff and sore from lying there all night; and I suppose the life preserver impeded the freedom of your motion. But now I have taken it off, and loosened your clothes; let me try to lift you to a sitting position; and after a little while, perhaps, you will find that you can walk.'

'Ow-oo! Ow-oo! Och hone! Och hone! It's for my sins! It's for my sins!' howled

the woman, as Miss Conyers tenderly and patiently lifted her up. Doubtless the poor creature was bruised and shaken, and found motion rather painful, however necessary; but then she had not the least patience in suffering, and she howled terrifically.

'And sure,' she complained, as she sat and rubbed her limbs, 'ye'v all had your tay this morning, and I havn't had the laste taste iv breakfast!'

'We have all had our tea!' repeated Miss Conyers, sorrowfully struck to the hear. by the contrast presented in the sweet home thought of the peaceful morning meal, and the utter deprivation of all hope and comfort in this strange and dreary place 'Oh, Judith, do you not know where we are?'

'Sure, and I know well enough itself! We're on shore so we are; and I want my tay,' said the Irish woman, petulantly; for she seemed to have forgotten that all the provisions were lost.

'Oh, Judith, we are on the shore, you and myself are on shore, but where our companions are, Heaven only knows.'

'Och hone, och hone. It is true? is is true?'

'It is true that I have seen here no sign of any survivor of our ship's company, though they may possibly have been saved elsewhere.'

'Oh my father, oh my father. Ah, thin, are ye swallowed up in the salt say? Ow-oo. Ow-oo. Och none, Och hone. That ever I should live to see the black day,' howled the woman, swaying herself back and forth. And she kept up these loud lamentations for so long a time, that at length Miss Conyers, who was sitting patiently by her side, stooped and whispered:

'Judith, it is sometimes a consolation to the survivors of a calamity to know that their departed friends have escaped by death the more terrible misfortunes to wh ch they, the survivors, are still exposed. It has been a comfort to me, and it may be to you, to think that our friends are saved from being devoured by wild beasts, or tortured by savages, or slowly starved to death on this desolate shore, as we are likely to be.'

'Ah, bad luck till ye. It's a Job's comforter ye are, itself, entirely. Will it bring me father back to have the bastes make a male of meself, sure? Ow-oo, Ow-oo, Ow-oo.' And the lamentations re-commenced louder than before.

Britomarte sat patiently beside this half-civilised creature, listening wearily to her howlings, until at last they were answered by howlings of another sort.

Miss Conyers looked up, and Judith dropped her apron and stared.

Before them stood a large hyena, with his head thrown back, his mouth wide open, and his teeth gleaming as he laughed the horrible laugh of his kind.

Judith, forgetting alike her sorrows and her infirmities, started up to run.

But the hyena, apparently as much afraid of the unknown creature who had jumped up, as she was of him, started and scampered off as fast as he could go.

And Miss Conyers gave her arm to her frightened companion, to help her to a place of greater safety.

CHAPTER XXI.

LEFT TO HIS FATE.

Nor, cruel as it seemed, could he
Their haste, himself, condemn;
Aware that flight, in such a sea,
Alone, could rescue them;
Yet bitter felt it still to die,
Deserted, and his friends so nigh.
—*Goldsmith.*

And now let us see what in the mean-time had become of Justin, left with his few unfortunate companions to perish on the deserted wreck.

After he had forcibly torn Britomarte from her clinging hold upon his bosom, and dropped her into the outstretched arms of Mike Mullony, and had heard her last despairing cry, and had waved his hand for the life-boat to be pushed off,—he abruptly turned away that he might not have his resolution shaken by the imploring words and gestures of her whom he loved more than life; for he did not know that with the cry still upon her lips she had swooned away in the arms that had received her.

He climbed with difficulty up the inclined plane of the half-submerged quarter-deck to the stern, which was lifted out of the water and wedged tightly in a cleft of the rock at an angle of about forty-five degrees, more or less.

There he turned and stood nearly waist-deep in water, holding on to the shrouds of the mizzen-mast to keep from being carried off by the waves.

The sea that continued to break over the wreck with tremendous shocks, did not, however, rise far above the foot of the mizzen-mast; though every wave that thundered over the quaking deck shook the wreck to its keel, and nearly swept the man from his holdings.

Yet there he stood, intently watching the receding life-boat and silently praying for her safety, as she laboured through the heavy sea.

And even when she was lost to sight, in the deep fog that enveloped the distant, unknown shore, he continued to gaze after her, until an enormous wave broke over the ship, burying him up to his neck in water and almost tearing him from the holdings where he clung with all his strength.

As the wave fell back a terrible cry arose from the sea.

Justin, clinging still to the shrouds, bent his head forward to see whence it came. And to his horror and grief, he saw a man's hand and arm strike up for an instant through the foaming wave and then sink out of sight.

'Great Heavens! who is it?' Which of my friends has been swept off?' cried Justin, gazing in sorrow upon a calamity that he was powerless to prevent.

But the arm arose no more, and Justin turned his head to look over the portion of the deck that was still above the water to see what had become of his companions.

There were but three of them—Mr. Ely and Mr. Breton, whom the sailors had refused to receive on the heavily-laden life-boats, and Captain McKenzie, whom they would willingly have taken off, but that he regarded it as a point of honour to remain with the passengers whom he was unable to rescue.

Justin looking all over the deck, saw nothing of these men. Until the moment he had heard the cry of the drowning man, he had been so much absorbed in watching the fate of the life-boat which contained all that he loved most on earth, that he had quite forgotten his companions in misfortune. Now, however, he looked around for them with great anxiety. One of them was lost—carried off the deck by that last great wave—that was certain; but which one? Was it either of the two young missionaries who with himself had been abandoned to destruction, or was it the brave and loyal McKenzie, who voluntarily shared the fate of those he could not save?

It was impossible as yet to tell; for look as he might, Justin could see neither of his companions.

He tried to think when and where he had seen them last; and he recollected that it was on the starboard gangway where the three stood near together when the first life-boat, containing, besides a portion of the crew, the two young missionary ladies, was preparing to leave the ship. He himself had turned away and followed Britomarte to the stern, and his whole attention had been given to her, until he lowered her into the second life-boat. And after that he had seen no more either of the missionaries or the captain.

Now what had become of them? One was drowned; but where were the others? Justin asked himself the question, and looked about for the answer in vain. They were nowhere in sight. They were not on deck, that also was certain. It was possible that the two survivors might be in the cabin which from the position of the wreck was as yet a place of safety. He called aloud with all the strength of his sonorous voice, which rang out clearly above the thunder of the waves:

'Ely!—Breton!—McKenzie!'

'And but the sounding sea replied,
And fast the waves rolled on.'

'McKenzie!—Breton!—Ely!' he called again; but called in vain.

'Oh, the roaring of the sea drowns my voice, I suppose, so that they cannot hear me; but as soon as it is safe to let go these shrouds, if the wreck holds together, I will go down into the cabin and look for them. Great Heavens! now I think of it, it must have been McKenzie who was lost. He must have remained on deck. He never would 'have hidden himself in the cabin,' thought Justin, with an accession of sorrow, for he esteemed the brave and loyal captain far more than he did the well-meaning but rather weak-minded young missionaries.

In his eager look after his companions, he had ceased to watch the waves, and so he had not observed that the sea arose no higher, that the last great wave was the climax of its swell, and that now it seemed to be gradually subsiding.

His anxiety to search the cabin, was now greater than ever; for he 'hoped even against hope' to find the good and brave McKenzie safe within its shelter. He waited and watched his opportunity to try to reach the cabin.

When these had gone down a little, and the waves came with less force, but long before it was quite safe for him to leave his holding, he let go the shrouds, and began to climb the inclined deck, holding by anything that he could lay his hands on, until he reached the cabin door.

It was a feat of gymnastics to get down the companion ladder, and when he had safely reached the bottom, he inadvertantly lost his footing, and slid all the way down the leaning floor, until he was stopped by the opposite partition.

There he arose to his feet, stood ankle deep in water, and looked around. But he could see nothing, it was nearly dark in the cabin, the dead lights being up, as they had

been put at the commencement of the storm. He listened, but he could hear nothing except the beating of the waves that still broke over the wreck, though with decreasing force. Again he called out:

'McKenzie! Breton! Ely! where are you! For Heaven's sake answer!'

But there was no reply. His anxiety became intolerable.

He climbed the leaning floor again, and scaled the companion ladder, and with great difficulty, succeeded in taking down the dead-lights and letting daylight into the cabin.

Then he returned to the cabin, and clearly saw its condition.

From the foot of the ladder, the floor inclined at an angle of about forty-five degrees. The highest part near the ladder was free from water, commenced around the pedestal of the centre-table, and became deeper as the floor was lower, until at the partition wall it was two feet deep. The chairs and all the movable furniture had slidden down the sloping floor, and lay, half submerged and piled against the wall. The doors of the state-rooms were open, and the furniture within them was in the utmost confusion. And yet everything there—the women's clothing, hanging on the pegs or dropped upon the berth, the little work-basket fallen up side down upon the floor, the scattered books, the flats—all was suggestive of life; but it was of desolate life, for all was chaos—still life, for not a living creature was to be seen.

A shock of alarm, almost of conviction that his three companions had all been lost, struck like an iceboit through his heart. He went into all the state rooms, one by one.

They all exhibited the wild disorder he had partly seen through the open doors, not only that of small sleeping appartments hastily evacuated, but that consequent upon the hurricane. The two state-rooms to the right and left of the companion ladder, being in the highest part of the leaning cabin were comparatively dry, the other two, lower down, were partly submerged.

No human being was to be found in either but on the upper berth of the spare state-room lay Judith Riordan's cat, quietly and comfortably nursing her three kittens. On seeing Justin's face leaning over her, she began to purr with delight. What a contrast was this picture to all the desolation around?

But Justin turned away, sick at heart, to prosecute further what he felt would be a vain search for his missing friends.

The dining cabin was on the deck above, but it had been so continually swept through by the tremendous seas which had broken over the ship, that it seemed scarcely possible any living creature should have found refuge there, yet a forlorn hope, he went thither to seek them.

And what a scene of destruction met him there.

The sea, that had fallen considerably, no longer swept through it, but everything was shaken together in the maddest medley. The table which had been laid for the supper which poor Mrs. Breton so greatly lamented the loss of, was standing in its place, for it was a fixture, and the glasses that were fitted in the swinging rack above the table were also safe, but everything else was thrown out of place and smashed to atoms, or piled up in the lowest part of the leaning floor. In the highest part of this cabin, were two doors, leading into two large state-rooms, the right-hand one as you stood facing them was the captain's private room, the left-hand one was the doctor's. Justin opened the door of the captain's room, but found it unoccupied. A sound of pitiful whining and barking came from the doctor's room. Justin opened the door, and found the doctor's little dog, who leaped upon him with the wildest demonstrations of delight, but otherwise this room, like the captain's, was unoccupied.

And now the anxious dread became a fatal certainty—his companions were all three lost—swept from the deck by that overwhelming wave. But yet, stay,—one hope remained. They were not on the wreck, that was certain; but they might have been taken off at the last moment by the first life-boat that had left the ship. They might have been so taken off without his knowledge, for he had left them standing on the starboard gangway, near the boat in which the two young wives were wildly pleading with the crew to save their husbands, the two young missionaries shaking with agitation in this crisis of their fate, and the captain pale with passion, and stern in his determination to share the fate of his abandoned ship and passengers. So he had left them to follow Britomarte and take her to the other boat, and he had not seen them since.

They might have been saved by the relenting boat's crew; but if so, who was the cast-away that he had seen and heard in the uplifted arm and voice for one instant before he—the cast-away—was whelmed in the sea?

Again came the overpowering conviction—it was the brave McKenzie who was lost. The young missionaries had probably been taken off at the prayers of their wives; for

sailors have a soft place in their hearts, or heads, for the woes of women, and will risk much to alleviate them; and so they had probably consented to risk the swamping of their heavily laden boat by the additional weight of the two young husbands rather than listen to the sobs and cries of the two heart-broken young wives. But Captain McKenzie had chosen to remain on the wreck with his one abandoned passenger—Justin Rosenthal; and he—the gallant McKenzie, had been swept off the deck and was lost!

Such was the conclusion that Justin came to. And at the thought, he sat down and dropped his head upon his hands and sobbed aloud; for, you see, as I have often said before, the bravest are always the tenderest.

The doctor's little dog, unable to endure such an appalling sight, to him, as a man's distress, jumped and whined around him in sympathetic grief and terror.

At length Justin lifted up his bowed head and tried to bring reason and religion to the relief of his great regret. He reflected that the death of so good a man could but have been a quick passage to eternal bliss—a blessed fate compared to that which awaited himself, left to perish slowly on the abandoned wreck, or that which attended the fugitives in the boats, exposed to battle with the elements, and perhaps with hunger and thirst for days, upon the bare chance of saving their lives.

Somewhat strengthened by the first clause of his reflections upon the eternal destiny of the brave and good captain, and very much distracted by the counter-irritant of his anxiety for the fate of the life-boats, Justin Rosenthal arose to leave the dining cabin; the little dog jumping and barking around him.

Just as he went out on deck, the sun broke through a mass of black clouds, and striking upon the bronzes of the stern, lighted up the whole wreck in a perfect blaze of glory!

It was the same 'star of hope' that had been seen by Britomarte, from the life-boats, just before the wreck disappeared from her view in the distance. For it must be remembered that the wreck, being much the larger object of the two, and being, besides, hoisted high upon the rocks, was visible to the boat's crew long after the boat was lost to Justin's sight.

By noon the sea had fallen so much, that the whole length of the deck from stem to stern was above the water; and Justin was enabled to take note of the actual condition of the ship.

She remained in the same position, her stern lifted high and wedged tight in the crevice of the rocks, and her deck inclined at a great angle. Her bows were very much broken and her keel was gored by the sharp points of the rocks upon which she had struck and where she was fast fixed. Her hold must have been full of water, which would have sunk her but for the fact that she was high and fast upon the rocks; that with the rise and fall of the waves the large leaks let out the water as easily as they let it in.

Justin went down to the lower deck and examined the forecastle, which he found in an even greater state of chaos than the cabin and the saloon had been. Everything was saturated with sea water.

From there he went into the store-room, which he found in the same condition. All the provisions that could be hurt by salt water were totally ruined—except a few articles that, being in water tight receptacles, remained uninjured.

Feeling faint from long fasting, Justin broke open a tin canister of biscuits and sat down to satisfy his hunger upon that dry fare. The little dog that had trotted after him wherever he went, as if afraid of being left behind, now stopped and stood on his hind legs and began to beg, as his poor master, the little Dutch doctor, had taught him to do. Then perceiving that his new master did not notice him, he began to expostulate in short impatient barks.

Justin threw him some biscuits, and leaving him to nibble them, went to the upper deck.

How rapidly the sea had fallen! The jagged rocks upon which the bows of the ship rested were laid bare. The wind had changed, and blew directly off that distant, unknown shore, rolling the fogs out to sea and towards the wreck. While Justin strained his eyes to make out, if he could, what sort of shore it was, he felt something rub against his ankles and heard a mew.

He glanced down and saw the poor cat, who was rubbing her furry sides against his limbs, and mewing piteously, and gazing up into his face with that helpless, appealing look with which the brute creation in their need seem to pray to the human for relief.

'Poor little animal!' said Justin, stooping, and gently stroking her fur. 'Poor little companion in wretchedness! You look up in my face with your perplexed eyes, as if you think I have the power, and ought to have the will, to help you. But you are half famished, and I have nothing but a biscuit to give you. And as you are not carnivorous, it is not your natural food.'

And he broke up the biscuit and scattered the pieces on the deck.

And pussy, granivorous though she was not, pounced upon the fragments as if they had been so many young mice, and devoured them all before she returned to her kittens.

Justin remained on deck until the sun went down; and then through one hour of twilight, and one dark hour that intervened before the moon rose.

Since the wind had sprung up again, the sea had been gradually getting up, so gradually that Justin had not at first perceived the change. But during the interval of that dark hour that preceded the rising of the moon, it had gained so considerably, that when the moon did rise and reveal the scene, Justin saw that it had again covered the rocks, upon which the ship rested, and partly covered the bows.

'Ah! the boats! the boats! if the wind and the sea get up again to any height what will become of them?' he exclaimed, in deep anxiety.

He remained on the deck watching. The wind and the sea continued to rise. The wind blew furiously, and the waves dashed over the bows of the ship. Justin again climbed up the leaning quarter-deck as far as the stump of the mizzen mast, where again he clung to the shrouds for safety. He thought not of himself. He thought only of the life-boats! and perhaps only of the one that contained Britomarte! With how much good reason he feared for it the reader already knows; for it was in this very gust that the life-boat was swamped.

It was but a short gust—a mere reflex of the late hurricane—and so about midnight the wind suddenly fell, and the waves began to subside.

Then Justin, worn out with long watching, found his way to the cabin, and threw himself upon one of the berths in Britomarte's abandoned state-room.

For some hours he lay, not sleeping, but thinking of her, and praying for her safety. Then, as even convicts sometimes sleep the night before their execution, he, Justin, notwithstanding his own great personal peril, and his excessive anxiety for Britomarte's fate, fell asleep, and slept long and well.

CHAPTER XXII.

ON THE ISLAND.

The isle is full of noises,
Sounds and sweet airs that give delight, but hurt not;
Sometimes a thousand twanging instruments
Will hum about my ears, and sometimes voices.—*Shakespeare.*

A sunbeam awoke Justin from a deep and dreamless sleep—a sunbeam that streamed in through the open cabin windows, and struck upon the metal water-service in its fixed receptacle on the centre-table, which stood immediately opposite his state-room door, into which it scintillated rays of dazzling splendour.

Aroused from a state of profound unconsciousness, Justin could not at first recall the events that had preceded his sleep, which was the first one he had enjoyed since the great catastrophe of the shipwreck.

But soon memory returned, bringing in her train all the horrors of his situation. He knew now that the ship was wrecked upon the breakers of an unknown coast, that the crew had abandoned her to destruction, and left him to share her fate.

When he turned out of his berth he noticed that the cabin was entirely free from water, from which circumstance he judged that the waves had quite subsided.

He climbed up on deck to take a look at the prospects there. He found that the ship was high and dry upon the rocks, and that the water in her hold had run out.

The sky was perfectly clear and beautifully blue, and the sun shone down upon a sea as calm as an island lake.

In the pure atmosphere the distant land could be distinctly seen, with its rugged white line of rock-bound coast in strong relief between the deep blue sky and deep blue sea.

But as Justin dropped his eyes upon the intervening space between the land and the wreck, an exclamation of surprise and joy escaped him.

What he saw there was rescue! was safety. It was what could not have been seen at any other period since the gale, for at no other such period had the sea been so low as it was now. What he saw then was an extremely long and narrow chain of rocks, reaching out from the distant shore to the point upon which the ship had been wrecked. It was a natural causeway, extending from the land far out into the sea. When the causeway was high, this causeway was deeply covered with water, and thus the

THE PROPERTY OF THE ATHENAEUM CLUB, NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THE READING ROOM.

ship, when driven so far out of her course, had struck upon it and had been wrecked. But now the sea had fallen, and the causeway was above the water, so that any expert walker and climber might pass over it almost dry shod to the land.

After the first shock of joy with which Justin greeted this open road to life, he thought of his companions who had committed themselves to the wildness of the sea, in no better vessels than the boats, and he earnestly regretted that they had not remained on the wreck.

And if he thought with regret of them, over whose action he had no sort of control, with what poignant remorse he thought of Britomarte, whom he had forced against her will to leave the wreck. Oh! what if she had never reached the land. He would in that case have been little less than her murderer. But then what human insight could have imagined this covered causeway which was to be revealed, and open a road to the land? Yet how bitterly he lamented that he had forced her to leave him. But she must be safe, he thought, she could not have been created to perish so miserably, he hoped, prayed, and finally believed that she was safe, for a powerful conviction of her continued existence upon this earth took possession of him and dispelled all his doubts.

Justin was not one of the sort who stand idle and indulge in speculations while there is anything to do. He knew that the first thing for him to do was to try to reach the shore by that causeway.

He knew that there was no danger of the ship breaking up just yet; unless there should be another hurricane, which was not to be expected, at least until the next change of the moon. He knew also that while she held together, the ship afforded a safer place of refuge than the unknown land might offer, for on the ship there was nothing to injure him, while on the land he might fall into the hands of cannibals. And in that case what could one man do against a whole tribe? Still, he considered, that unless he would perish in the sea when the ship should break up, that unknown land, with all its hidden dangers, must sooner or later be his destination, and he thought the sooner he ventured upon it the better.

With this resolution he went into the captain's private cabin to look for a small telescope which he felt sure was there, and which he wished to use in surveying the causeway and the shore. He found it and came out. The little dog jumped down from the doctor's berth, where he had perched himself in his accustomed place to sleep, and began barking and jumping up and wagging his tail by way of a morning greeting to his new master.

Justin patted his head, and then went out on deck, followed by his little four-footed companion.

The ship had struck at right angles with the chain of rocks, so that the starboard gangway was towards the shore. There Justin stood, and adjusted his glass to view the far-reaching causeway and the distant land.

But even with the aid of his telescope he could discover little more than he knew before. He could only more distinctly ascertain that the causeway was a chain of rocks leading to the shore—a road that would be covered with water at high tide, and be entirely bare at low tide, and that the distant land presented only a rock-bound and forbidding aspect.

While he was still gazing, he felt something claw at his boots, mewing pitifully, and the next instant he heard a shrill, barking, and spitting, and clapper-clawing. And he looked down to see the cat and dog engaged in a fierce combat, in which the fur flew plenteously.

Justin separated them, lifting the cat up in his arms, and giving the dog an admonishing kick. The he took them both down into the store room, and fed them apart.

While he was busy in this humane duty, he was greeted by a dismal sound—a prolonged 'Ooom-mow!' that he knew must come from the captain's cow. He followed the sound until it led him to her pen, which was between decks in the stern, a position that had saved her from being drowned, as the stern was lifted at such a high angle upon the rocks. Justin had no sooner reached the cow-pen, than he was greeted by a perfect babel of noises from the animals confined in that part of the ship. The hens clucked, the ducks quacked, the sheep bleated, and, above all, the pigs squealed as if they would have squealed themselves to death, and their hearers to deafness.

All these animals had been saved by their position from drowning, but they were in great danger of starving.

Justin went back to the store-room, and found an ax, and broke open several boxes of grain, and then went to the fresh water butts, and drew water, and mixed food, and carried it to the pens, and fed the famished creatures.

When he had satisfied their wants, he himself began to feel the cravings of hunger—and of hunger that could no longer be satisfied by dry biscuits. So he resolved to try if he could not prepare for himself something like a comfortable breakfast.

He went first into the caboose or kitchen of the ship, and after a search found some matches and kindling wood, of which he made a fire in the stove; then he filled a kettle with water, and set it on to boil.

Then he went to the store-room, to see what he could find that was fit for food. He found several open boxes of tea and coffee, and barrels of sugar; but their contents were half washed out by the sea, and wholly spoiled. On farther search, however, he found some boxes and barrels that had not been burst open, and on examining these he saw that their contents were good. He found a basket, and put into it some coffee and sugar and biscuits; and he took a piece of bacon, that was well wet with sea-water, but none the worse for that; and he carried them all into the caboose, where he began to prepare his breakfast. He looked up a coffee-pot and a frying-pan; and he made some coffee and set it on to boil, and he cut and washed some rashers of bacon and set them on to fry.

The next thing to do was to milk the cow, and he found a pail and went and milked her. After that he thought he would try to find something like a decent breakfast service with which to set a table, that he might eat like a civilised creature, and not like a brute or a barbarian. To do this he went to the dining-cabin, and searched among the broken crockery ware, that lay in heaps at one end; until he found what he wanted, or what, at least, would answer his purpose—namely, half of a large dish, a whole plate, a big cup minus only the broken handle, and a cracked saucer. Whole knives, and forks, and spoons were easily enough found. And with this breakfast service rescued from chaos, and with a table-cloth that he took as he passed out, he went back into the caboose, and set his table.

Then he had only to turn his rashers, and toast his biscuits, and boil his milk, and his breakfast was all ready.

The smell of the savoury food drew the dog and the cat to him.

Too keen after the victuals to think of engaging in battle just then, they tacitly declared a truce, and separated, and stood, one on one side and one on the other, begging. And Justin, while he ate his own breakfast, fed them.

When his meal was over, he washed up his elegant breakfast service, and put it away, and shook and folded his table-cloth, and made all things as tidy as the circumstances would permit.

Then he prepared to go on shore, not knowing what he should meet there. He took every prudent precaution for his own comfort and that of the creatures he was about to leave behind.

First of all, he placed a quantity of food and drink in the pens where the animals were confined, so that they might not suffer from hunger or thirst. Then he set a pan of milk in the cabin for the cat. After which he filled a little basket with a day's provisions for himself, and put a pair of revolvers in one pocket, and a small telescope and a pocket compass in the other. Then he put on a broad-brimmed hat, and took in his hand a stout walking-stick, called the dog to follow him, and went carefully down the leaning deck to the bows of the ship, that were nearly on a level with the rocks. With one bound he sprang from the ship to the causeway. The little dog jumped after him.

The causeway was high and dry above the sea, and long and narrow in its course, and irregular and ragged in its aspect.

Walking on it would have been very dangerous, either to a reckless or a timid pedestrian.

But Justin was at the same time careful and fearless, and he and his little companion went on safely enough, though often slowly and with difficulty; for often a deep chasm cut the causeway across, and then Justin would be obliged to stop and consider the best way of getting over it, and then, with the aid of his walking-stick, he would have to descend very carefully down one side, and using his stick for a leaping-pole, throw himself across the isthmus at the bottom, and then as carefully ascend the other side.

There were many of these chasms, all more or less difficult and dangerous to cross.

Sometimes the little dog would follow him well enough, tripping down the first side, swimming the isthmus at the bottom, and climbing up the other side; but at other times, when the sides were very steep or the stream at the bottom very rapid, the little dog would come to a dead halt, and stand whining miserably, and Justin would have to turn back, and take him up in his arms, and carry him over.

Sometimes Justin was [illegible] hours in going the distance between the ship and the shore.

As he neared the shore, the causeway became wider and higher, until it began to assume the aspect of a cape or promontory, and so it continued to rise and widen until, almost unawares, Justin, with his dog, found himself ascending a rocky hill, in character almost a barren mountain.

In this aspect he found his walking-stick of great service in getting a purchase upon

the difficult ground; but he found the little dog a great trouble to him; for he—the dog—was tired, and would often stop and whine as persistently to be taken up and carried, as any spoiled child.

And Justin always indulged him, for he was much too kind-hearted to leave his little four-footed companion behind. Another hour's painful toil brought Justin to the top of the mountain, which he judged to be about a thousand feet above the level of the sea. The summit was as bare of vegetation as the ascent from the causeway had been; so that Justin, from his point of observation, had a very extended view of the landscape. He took out his telescope, adjusted it, and took a sweeping view around the horizon.

He found that the land was on all sides surrounded by the sea, and that he was on an island, oblong in shape, and, as well as he could judge, about twenty miles in length by about ten in its utmost width.

The lofty hill, or mountain, upon which he stood, was the highest point upon the island, and was situated near the southern end—the long causeway upon which the ship had been wrecked being the extreme southern point. And though this mountain was barren on the side ascending from the causeway, yet on the side descending towards the interior, it was fringed with beautiful trees and gemmed with sparkling fountains. The centre of the island was very luxuriant in tropical vegetation. Towards the extreme north the land descended and narrowed to a sandy neck of not more than a mile in width from sea to sea; but this neck was thickly wooded with the tall and graceful cocoa-palms.

Having observed so much, and the time being now about two hours after noon, Justin, who was 'sharp set,' from his long and toilsome walk along the causeway and up the mountain, sat down and emptied his basket in preparation for his mid-day meal. It was but a simple luncheon of cold bacon, ship biscuit and milk, but he and his little dog enjoyed it very much.

Having finished his meal, he began to descend the mountain, with the purpose of exploring the island as far as he could that afternoon, and of spending the night upon it, if he should find a convenient place of repose.

He designed to return on the next morning to the ship, to feed the animals and make preparations for bringing away all that was likely to be useful to him in this strange land, which he foresaw would probably be his home for as long as he should live in this world.

With the aid of his stick he slowly descended the difficult mountain side. About half-way down he stopped at a fountain to assuage his thirst. The little dog, who had kept close to his heels, followed his example, and lapped lower down the stream.

Then Justin resumed his journey, and continued it without interruption until, near the base of the mountain, the little dog startled a covey of splendid oriental birds that burst up from their cover, deafening him with their explosive cries, and dazzling him with their gorgeous colours, so that the whole thing affected him something like the sudden letting off of fire-works would have done. The little dog took the affair as a personal affront, and continued to bark himself hoarse long after the winged fire-works had disappeared in the distance. Justin pacified him at length, and they went on. As they reached the foot of the mountain, the sun sank behind the horizon.

Justin sat down to rest and reflect.

'Night before last on the deck of the ship, scudding before a terrible hurricane; last night alone upon the wreck, in the midst of the stormy sea; to-night on an unknown and what seems to be an uninhabited island. What next, I wonder! Well, I earnestly thank God that my life has been preserved! But what has become of her? of Britomarte, whom I forced to leave the ship? Oh! would to Heaven I had permitted her to remain! she would have been even now by my side! And now—where is she? where? Shall I ever meet her again on this side of the grave? Ah, heaven, who can answer any of those questions?' he groaned, and unable longer to sit still, he got up and walked forward, still followed by his faithful little four-footed friend. He walked on and on through the woods at the foot of the mountain, while twilight deepened into night, and the stars came out in the purple-black sky; then he sat down and rested for a little time, while the dog coiled itself up and went to sleep at his feet. Then he got up again and resumed his walk, followed still by his sleepy but loyal adherent.

He walked on until the moon arose, when he discovered that he had come out upon the sea coast, through the grove of cocoa palms that he had seen from the mountain top.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A MEETING BY MOONLIGHT.

'Well met by moonlight, proud Titania!'
—*Shakespeare.*

After the encounter with the hyena, Britomarte conducted her frightened companion to that thicket of woods and grottoes where she had found the spring.

She made her sit down on a fragment of rock under a spreading tree, and then she went to the spring and found a large leaf, which she doubled up in the form of a cup, and caught some water, which she brought to the woman, who drank it eagerly.

'Ah, thin, bless the Lord for giving us water itself! Sure there's nothing like it, at all at all, whin the thirst is upon one!' said Judith, gratefully, drawing a long breath.

Britomarte then went to a tree where she saw fruit resembling the wild plum growing, and she gathered some and brought them to Judith.

But when the woman opened her mouth again, it was not to swallow a plum, but to relieve her feelings on the subject of her fright.

'Ah, thin, the horrid object iv a brute baste! Sure I shall niver get over the looks iv him, as he stood there, with the hair on his back bristled up like spikes, and his head hev back and his jaws open the whole length iv his throat, showing all his gashly teeth, and he a laughing and a ha-ha-ha-ing like the divil himself, to think what a good male he was going to make iv me flesh and blood! Urrrr! it makes me curdle up all over like scalded crame to think iv it now! I wouldn't a minded if the crayture had howled or roared like any other Christian baste; but to stand there and fling his head back and grin and laugh and ha! ha! out loud with the thought iv how he should crunch me bones and suck me blood! Urrrrrr!'

'Judith, if I were you, I would not let my mind dwell upon the subject. The beast had no idea of harming you. He was quite as much frightened of you as you were of him. He ran away the instant you started up,' said Miss Conyers.

'Did he though? Sure and if I'd just kept still a minute longer, he'd a made a male iv me, before he stopped! And I'm thinking the place is full iv them! Lord betune us and harrum! what's that?' suddenly exclaimed the woman, breaking off and glancing in terror up into the tree under which she sat.

'It is only a monkey! I have seen several since I have been here. And you have seen many elsewhere. They are quite harmless.'

'Ah, thin, how full iv frights the place is itself!'

'Take some of these plums, Judith. They are very nice, and I am sure you must need food,' said Miss Conyers, pouring a quantity of the luscious fruit into the woman's lap.

'Ah, Lord kape us! what's cowld plums to do to stop the gnawing iv me stummick? Sure I want me warrum tay and milk toast,' whimpered the woman.

'But you can't get either tea or toast. And besides, fruit is our natural food, if we did but know it.'

'Yis, but sure meself is not in a state of nature, but in a state iv grace, iver since I was baptized, thanks to the Lord and all the hooly saints, and so I want me warrum tay and toast,' whined Judith.

'But nature or grace, as you can't get tea and toast, you had better content yourself with fruit and water.'

'Ow-oo! Ow-oo! Och-hone! Och-hone!' howled Judith.

Miss Conyers laid her hand gently upon the woman's shoulder, and looked her in the face, thus tenderly and silently soothing her agitation.

'That iver we should have lived to see to see this dark day! Och-one! Och-hone! Ow-oo!' howled Judith, though in a softer tone.

'Do not grieve so, my poor girl! It is quite useless, you know. Try to compose yourself,' said Miss Conyers, gently.

'I can't help it! I can't help it! Ow-oo! what's to become iv us in this howling wilderness iv a place? Sure there's a laughing baste behind ivery bush, and a haythen up ivery tree! And if we're not kilt by the one, we'll be ate alive by the other! Och-hone! Och-hone!'

'I begin to think there is no cause for such a fear, Judith. We have seen no sign of human habitation here, either savage or civilized, and no animal more formidable than the hyena.'

'Faix, thin, there's small comfort in that same! For if we're not kilt be the haythen, nor ate be the bastes, we'll perish entirely for the want iv our tay! Ow-oo!'

'We need not perish from that cause, Judith. Tea is not a necessary of life.'

'And if tay is not a necessary of life, I should like to know what is, itself? Sure I can do without bacon, and aven praties, brither than me tay! And I'm murthered entirely for the want iv it this minute. Och-hone!'

It was a beautiful trait in the character of

the man-hater that she never lost patience with the infirmities of her own sex. And now in the midst of the awful realities of her own position; bereft of all she loved in the world; cast upon an unhabited island, and hopeless of all deliverance, except by death, she still controlled her own emotions, and tried to soothe her companion's sorrows, which were all from imaginary sources.

'And sure, thin, about our clothes, itself! We can't go on wearing iv the same clothes for iver and iver! And where are we to get others at all?'

'We may never need others, Judith.'

'Ah, Lord kape us, do you mane we may niver live to wear these same out, at all, at all? Is that what you mane, sure? Och hone. Och hone, the day.'

'We are in the hands of the Lord, Judith.'

'In the hands of the Lord. Och hone! that's what's they say whin people are at death's door, sure. Ow-oo, Ow-oo.'

'Well, "man's extremity is God's opportunity," you know, Judith.'

'No, I don't know it. It ain't in the Catechism. Ow-oo. Ow-oo.'

Finding all her efforts to console her inconsolable companion quite fruitless, Miss Conyers became silent. She hoped that the woman might soon become weary of howling, and so stop with exhaustion. But Judith's vocal powers were equal to those of a dog baying the moon.

At length Miss Conyers, nearly deafened by the noise quietly arose with the intention of walking a little way out of hearing.

But Judith caught her dress and held her, exclaiming:

'Ah, don't lave me in me disthress. Sure it's only a Job's comforter ye are at best, but faix, Job's comforter is betther nor no comforter at all, at all.'

Miss Conyers very [illegible] her seat, and Judith, in a [illegible]-like manner recommenced her [illegible] gave her whole mind to it for the next hour—at the end of which she stopped, as it seemed, for the mere want of breath.

'Judith, you ought to take some food. It is now noon, and you have eaten nothing. There are some cocoa-nut trees growing not far from here, and if you cannot eat the plums we will go and try and get some cocoa-nuts. They are very rich and nutritious. I tasted one this morning,' said Britomarte.

'Sure will ye lave me be, wid yer cokey-nuts and tarsh? Tare and sunds! will hard cokey-nuts comfort me poor stommick that is a-crying out for its tay?—Ow-oo, Ow-oo, Ow-oo!'

And Judith, with recovered breath recommenced her song and sung it straight ahead for another hour; at the end of which she was answered by another howling from the depths of the thicket;

'Lord kape us from harm, there's that laughing divil again!' she exclaimed, jumping up and running in the direction opposite to that from which she had heard the voice of the hyena.

Miss Conyers got up and followed her, with the intention of keeping her in sight and out of danger.

Judith ran straight towards the grove of cocoa-nut trees, and there she sank from the united effects of terror and exhaustion.

But she was not permitted to stay there in peace for one moment; for no sooner had she dropped down there than she was greeted with a chorus of screams and pelted with a shower of missiles. Looking up, she saw that the tree over her head was filled with monkeys. And with a terrible yell she once more started and ran for her life—and this time she ran towards the sea-coast and dropped down upon the beach.

There Britomarte at length found her.

'Judith,' she said, softly, 'I am very sorry to see you suffer so much fear. I wish I could convince you that there is really no cause for it.'

'Isn't there, though? Faix, the place is full iv divils!'

'They were monkeys, Judith; small monkeys, they could not [illegible] seriously.'

'Oh, couldn't they? the da[illegible] I'm bruised black and blue wid [illegible] pelting they gave me, let alone being bate to jelly! Och hone. Och-oo. And sure I'm starved entirely till my stummick is gone to my back-bone! And where are we to slape the night; and the sun getting low already.'

'Here are some cocoa-nuts, Judith. They will at least satisfy your hunger, and your thirst too, perhaps. Stop, let me break them for you,' said Miss Conyers. And she took a sharp-edged fragment of rock and broke one of the shells open and handed it to the woman, who, pushed to extremity by hunger, consented to take it. She drank the milk and ate the nut, and then held out her hand with the single word—

'Another!'

And Miss Conyers broke another for her, and still another, without once reflecting that she was reversing their positions by waiting upon Judith.

And Judith ate and drank with great avidity, only pausing to take breath, until she had disposed of four cocoa-nuts. After

which, with a deep sigh of satisfaction, she exclaimed:

'Ah, Lord be thanked! Sure whin one can a gin tay and toast for breakfast, nor mate and vigitables for dinner, cokey-nut and milk is good.'

Miss Conyers made a meal of the plums she had gathered.

But Judith now that her appetite was satisfied, found another source of trouble.

'Sure the sun is setting, and it will soon be dark! And Lord kape us, where will we slape?'

'It is a lovely summer evening, Judith. And there is a deep, dry grotto in the thicket that we left. We will stay here through the twilight, and through the dark hours before moon-rise, and then we will go to the grotto and sleep.'

'And have the laughing baste for a bedfellow! Yes, I reckon I will.'

'I tell you, my girl, that the "laughing baste," as you call him, will keep out of your way as zealously as you would keep out of his.'

'Well, may be so, and may be not. Divil a bit will I risk it,' said Judith.

And as the woman was determined to remain where she was, Miss Conyers concluded to stay with her.

And there they sat through the short twilight, and through the long, dark hours that intervened before the moon arose. The moon arose, a glorious golden globe, illumining with its rich, soft light, the broad expanse of sea, and the strange, wild land, with its stately palm trees.

Britomarte sat gazing with something like calm enjoyment upon the exceeding beauty of the scene. Sleeping, or forgotten in this quiet hour, seemed all her sorrows.

Judith gradually fell into a fitful sleep, from which every little sound—the rustling of a leaf in the breeze, the motion of a bird in its nest, the footstep of a small animal over the ground—awoke her with a start.

One one of these occasions, when she was trembling excessively, Britomarte again tried to persuade her to seek shelter in the grotto in the thicket.

'Judith,' she said, 'the dew is falling very heavily; and the dews in these latitudes are deadly, as you know. Let us go to the grotto. We shall be sheltered from the night air there, and safer, also, from the animals you fear so much, than we are here.'

But her arrangements were all in vain.

'No, but,' Judith replied, 'sure if they come upon me here, I can run away, "wid a fair field and no favour," as they say. But if they come in at me, in the hole iv a grotty, sure they'd have me all right, and ate me at their leisure, so they would.'

And in another instant Judith fell to nodding and snoring.

She was awakened up with a vengeance.

A grim footstep came crunching through the pebbles on the beach.

With a scream Judith started to her feet.

Miss Conyers also arose and listened.

And almost at the same instant Justin Rosenthal appeared before them.

'Lord kape us—it's his sperit!' gasped Judith, who was too panic-stricken to turn and fly; but stood with her face blanched as white as snow, and her mouth and eyes distended with terror.

Almost as much amazed stood Justin and Britomarte, gazing upon each other in incredulous astonishment and unspeakable joy! For an instant they stood thus, and then their joy broke forth:

'Saved! Oh, thank God! thank God!' exclaimed Justin, holding out his arms towards her.

She extended her hands. She could not speak; the overwhelming tide of joy had deprived her of the power.

But he caught her to his bosom; and she dropped her head upon his shoulder, and burst into a passion of tears and sobs.

'Oh, my own! my own!' he cried; 'my beloved! my peerless treasure! This is the very happiest moment of my life! How cheaply purchased with shipwreck, and the loss of everything else!'

Still she sobbed upon his shoulder, unable to make any other reply.

'You are with me! I have you, and I care for nothing that can befal me that does not part us!' he continued.

'And I'm left out in the cowld entirely,' said Judith, who had gradually recovered from her panic, and recognized the apparition as Mr. Rosenthal in the flesh.

'Britomarte! love! love! do you know how happy I am? Speak to me, love! I have not heard the sound of your voice yet, except in sobs. Speak to me, my own, only love!' whispered Justin.

'Oh, I am so glad, so glad, that you are saved! Oh, thank God! thank God! Oh, in what words can I thank God enough!' exclaimed Britomarte, with an emotion that shook her whole delicate frame.

He caught her closer to his bosom, and bent down his head over hers until his lips touched her forehead and his auburn locks mingled with her dark brown tresses.

'God bless you for every sweet word you have spoken, oh, my dearest! my dearest!' he murmured.

But it was not until her great passion of joy had somewhat exhausted itself that, she recollected herself, and gently attempted to withdraw from his embrace.

But of course he held her fast; until at length she said, ever so kindly, but ever so firmly:

'Let me go, please. I am not quite sane, I think! Oh, I am so glad, so glad you are safe! Thank God, with all my heart and soul! Oh, thank him for ever and ever! I do not care that I am shipwrecked on this foreign shore now,' she added, tearfully.

'But I; not so much. I rather like it,' replied Justin, as he sat her down upon a ledge of rocks and took a seat by her side.

'No more would I, if I had Rory Tom Tear for company me, and daddy, and could get the gig, and toast, and mate, and grapes, riglets,' muttered Judith, dropping into her old plate.

'I was so overjoyed to see you safe, that I forgot to ask how you were saved, or where your companions are, said Justin.

'My companions! Ah, Mr. Rosenthal, how selfish I was to forget them for a moment! Only myself and Judith Riordan chanced to be saved by having life-preservers on, and by being cast ashore by a wave. Our companions are lost!' said Britomarte, solemnly.

'Lost!' repeated Justin, gravely.

And a deep silence fell between them—a reverential silence in tribute to the dead, which every so quickly, a long silence, broken at length by the voice of Judith, who, forgetful of her losses, re-commenced her busy knitting.

'Lost!' again repeated Justin. 'Well, God's will be done. All our grief will not restore them to us. And another I suppose the following. I am too happy in this hour of reunion with you to feel unreasonable at any dispensation whatever.'

'How were you saved? Though I am so glad to see you saved, that I have scarcely realized as yet any curiosity about the manner,' said Miss Conyers.

'When the [illegible] you [illegible] while [illegible] the [illegible] then ship [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

them, of marriage generally,' said Miss Conyers, curtly.

And while she spoke these cold words, she longed of other words—uttered in her wild agony, at that bitter moment of parting—were echoing through her memory—'Justin! Justin! With you! My beloved! My beloved!'

And he saw again the outstretched arms and the wild, appealing glance with which she had uttered them. Had she forgotten them? or did she wish to ignore them? He could not tell. But he felt, of course, that honour and delicacy forbade him to allude to them, or even to the joy with which he received them, all these circumstances being 'proof as strong as Holy Writ' that she loved him as no sister ever loved a brother.

Now he answered her cold words as calmly as she had spoken them:

'While we remain on this island I will never even ask you for a promise or a hope of the sort; and this is the last time I will ever allude to the subject. But now you should have some repose. I can understand why you should deem it prudent to watch the night out rather than sleep in this strange land, which might, for aught you know, be infested with wild beasts; but now that I am here to defend you, there is no reason why you should not sleep in peace.'

'I was not afraid to go to sleep,' replied Miss Conyers, a little proudly; 'but my companion here refused to go into the shelter that I proposed, and I did not think it right to leave her alone.'

'It was like you to think of others first; but now you can both seek shelter and sleep while I watch. There is a fine grotto that I passed in my rambles over the island, which I think would afford you a safe place of refuge for to-night. To-morrow better shelter shall be provided.'

'I thank you earnestly,' said Miss Conyers. 'That grotto was the place of shelter that I first wished to go to. Come, Judith.'

'Save and I'll not budge a fut unless the gentleman promises to stand at the hole all night to keep off the laughing beste!' said the woman, defiantly.

'I promise that, Judith. I had a good night's rest on the wreck last night, and so I can very well afford to lose this night's sleep,' replied Mr. Rosenthal.

Britomarte objected strongly to Justin's proposed watching; but he succeeded in convincing her that he could watch without inconvenience. And so they all went to the grotto in the thicket.

Justin spread his great coat on the floor to make a bed for Britomarte, and then he bade her good night, and went out and took up his stand as sentinel before her rude bower.

CHAPTER XXIV.

MAKING THE BEST OF IT.

All places that the eye of Heaven visits
Are to the wise man ports and happy havens.
Teach thy necessity to reason thus—
There is no virtue like necessity.
—*Shakespeare.*

With the earliest dawn of morning Justin withdrew from his post and went and gathered some loose, dry sticks, and piled them up before the hole of the grotto, and lit a short distance from it. Then he took some matches that he had brought in his pocket, and kindled a fire to protect Britomarte and her attendant from the approach of any beast of prey; for it is well known that no wild animal will ever venture to come near a fire.

Then leaving his sleeping charge, he took up his stout walking-staff and hurried away as fast as he could go, in the direction of the causeway.

His wish and intention was to go to the ship and procure some provisions, for Britomarte's breakfast, and to return with them to the grotto before she should awake and miss him from his post.

Knowing now the way so well and being relieved from the trouble of looking after the little dog, that he had left sleeping at the feet of Britomarte, he made much faster progress over the distance between the island and the ship than he had made on the preceding day.

He plunged straight ahead through the thicket, without the slightest regard to briers and brambles. He passed over the mountain with more haste than ease; but finally he reached the landward end of the causeway with safety as well as with swiftness.

Then he set out to walk across the causeway to the ship. He hurried on without much respect to discretion, dragging himself down the steps with the aid of his walking-staff, which he used as a leaping pole, flinging himself across the chasms; and running on all the level places, until he reached the ship and jumped upon the leaning bows which were down upon the level of the causeway.

He found the ship very much in the same condition in which he had left her, in which she might remain for an indefinite length of time.

He found also a plenty of work to do, and he hastened to do it. First of all, the poor cat met him on deck, with every demonstration of delight a dumb creature could make. That was his welcome. But of course she had lapped up all the milk he had left for her in the cabin; and she wanted more.

He went immediately to the pens to look after the condition of the animals, and he found that they also had consumed all the provender he had placed there for them, and that they were clamorous for a new supply. He hastened to the store-room and mixed mashes and brought to the pens and fed all the creatures plentifully. Then he milked the cow and fed the cat.

For even in his eager impatience to get back to the island with provisions for his own suffering love, he could not neglect the sacred duty of relieving the wants of these poor dumb brutes which were so utterly helpless and dependent upon his kindness.

These duties faithfully discharged, he passed into the store-room to attend to the business upon which he had especially come. He looked up a large basket with a cover, and he proceeded to fill it with parcels of tea, coffee, sugar. Next he went to the pens again and found the hens' nests, and collected about a dozen fresh eggs, which he also added to his store.

Then he ascended to the dining saloon, and from the mounds of debris there he picked out a few knives, forks and spoons, and cups, saucers and plates, that had escaped the general crash, and put them in with the provisions. And he took a table-cloth and folded it and laid it over all the contents of the basket, which was now quite full, and upon which he shut down and fastened the cover.

Next he went down into the cabouse and looked up a tea-kettle, a frying-pan, a tea-pot and a coffee-boiler, and tied them together by the handles and hung them upon a pair of tongs which he slung over his left shoulder. And with his heavy basket of provisions on his right arm, and the handle of the tongs in his left hand, and his stout walking-staff gripped in his right hand, he left the wreck which lost cut upon his return to the island.

And upon the whole he looked not unlike one of Sheriman's bummers returning from a successful raid, made upon his own individual responsibility. It was as yet very early in the morning, the sun being just a little way above the horizon.

Meanwhile Britomarte and her companion in misfortune, worn out with long watching, slept like Rip Van Winkle, or the enchanted beauty, or the seven sleepers, or like death. There was nothing to disturb them. The distant sound of the sea that came softened to their senses; the nearer cooing of birds and rustling of leaves and ripple of waters, were all soothing, lulling, soporific sounds. They slept on until late in the morning, when Nature herself gently awakened them. They opened their eyes nearly at the same time; but lay for a few minutes without speaking. At length Judith, hearing Miss Conyers move slightly, inquired:

'Are ye asleep, ma'am?'

'No, Judith.'

'Are ye awake, thin?'

'Certainly.'

'Sure meself has had a queer drame entirely.'

'A dream, Judith?'

'Sure yes, ma'am—a queer drame entirely. I dramed we was sitting on the saynhere, looking at the moon, when suddenly—Lord kape us! the sperrit iv Mr. Rosenthal appeared to us. And thin, sure, the drame changed, and I thought it wasn't his sperrit at all at all, but meself. I'm feared it's a sign he's lost!'

'That's no dream, Judith, but a blessed reality. Mr. Rosenthal, thank Heaven! reached this shore in safety. Don't you remember that he brought us here, and stood sentinel at the entrance there, to guard us while we slept?'

'Oh, yes, sure, bother my head! what is it good for at all at all? Sure I know now it was no drame. Ah, Lord help us! I wish the shipwreck was a drame itself. Oh, me poor, culd daddy! me poor, culd daddy! shall I never see you again in this world? Are ye lost to me forever and iver—drowned in the salt say? And Fore Top Tom—me poor, dear, darlint Fore Top Tom! Oh, the black day! Ooh-hone! Ow-oo! Ow-oo!' cried the woman, suddenly remembering her bereavements, and giving way to the wildest expressions of grief.

Miss Conyers knew by the last twenty-four hours' experience that it was better to leave Judith alone in these periods of passionate sorrow, since all attempts to console her only made her worse, while if she were left to herself she soon recovered.

In this respect Judith was like an animal; her paroxysms of grief were no sooner over than their cause was forgotten until something new arose to remind her of it. And besides, she was easily consoled by physical comforts or distracted by physical discomforts.

The whole burden of the Jew Shylock's lamentations was—'My ducats and my daughter?' That of Judith's might have

here—: Me tay and me daddy!' And yet she had been a dutiful child, and her grief for the loss of her father was sincere while it lasted.

Miss Conyers laid her hand upon the girl's head, saying:

'Pray to the Lord, Judith; He only can comfort you.'

And then she passed out of the grotto, and went to the little fountain, and washed her face and hands, and wiped them as well as she could on her pocket-handkerchief. After which she washed her pocket-handkerchief, and spread it on the bushes to dry.

She looked around for Justin, but not seeing him anywhere, she thought that he had walked away on purpose to leave her and her attendant alone for a while, and that he would be back almost immediately. She did not surmise that he had returned to the ship.

Presently Judith emerged from the grotto. Poor thing! her eyes were red and her nose swollen; but her grief had for the present been washed away by her tears; and she spoke quite cheerfully:

'Sure where is he gone to, thin?'

'Mr. Rosenthal, do you mean, Judith?'

'Sure, who else would I be maning at all at all! Faix there is no other "he" on this island, if it is an island!'

'Then, Judith, since you mean Mr. Rosenthal, I must admonish you that it is not respectful to speak of a gentleman as "he."'

'A gentleman! Lord kape us! I thought we were all fray and aquil here, on this island, if we niver were anywhere else! But sure, where is the gintleman gone to, thin?'

'I don't know, Judith. I have not seen him this morning.'

'Bedad, thin, he's forsook us; and sure the laughing baste will be ating us alive next!'

'No, Judith, I am certain that Mr. Rosenthal has not forsaken us,' said Miss Conyers, earnestly.

'And here's been a fire! Who made it? And what will it be here for? Sure there's cannibals on the island, and they kindled it to cook us! Ooh-hone! Ow-oo!'

'Oh, hush, Judith! There is no human being on the island but our three selves. This fire was probably kindled by Mr. Rosenthal in the night to scare off that same laughing beast of which you stand in so much terror.'

'Ah, thin, sure it oughtn't to have been let go out. And what shall we kindle it with at all at all to kape off—Ooh murther! It's coming now! Hear it crashing through the bushes!' cried the woman, in a panic of terror.

'Be quiet, Judith. It is Mr. Rosenthal,' said Britomarte, as Justin came breaking through the thicket, and stood before them laden down with provisions and cooking utensils, and looking, as I said before, like one of Sherman's bummers, returned from a successful forage.

'Good morning, sister; I hope you rested well,' was his cheerful, smiling greeting, as he carefully set the basket down, and dropped the cooking utensils, and stretched his cramped arms.

'Thanks to your kind guardianship, very well,' said Britomarte, cordially.

'You are staring at that basket, Judith,' said Justin, laughing. 'Well, I have been to the ship, and brought off some provisions for breakfast. The greater part of the ship's stores are spoiled by the wetting they got in the storm; but still there is a considerable quantity which, from its position, escaped injury.'

'Ah, God bless you! have you brought any tay itself?' anxiously inquired Judith.

'Yes, Judith! I am happy to tell you that there are several chests of tea uninjured. I have brought a small portion of one of them in the basket.'

'Ah, Hivven bless you, sir! And Lord forgive me for saying we were all fray and aquil, which we're not, and niver can be! For sure you're not only a gintleman, as I niver can expect to be meself, but faix you're an angel all over, so you are! And—'

'There, there, Judith, that will do!' said Justin, laughing. 'Do you unpack the basket and lay the cloth, while I make a fire and hang on the kettle.'

'Ah, sure, that I will your honour! And I niver meant we were fray and aquil, at all at all! For troth, you're my guardian angel and pattern saint for bringing me the tay! Faix, I've been pining for me tay iver since I was shipwrecked, so I have! Lord kape me, I think I could do without mate and bread bether nor me tay!' said Judith as she bustled about unpacking the basket.

Justin meantime kindled a fire of logs. Then he procured three strong sticks of green wood, and stuck them into the ground at equal distances from each other around the fire, and bent their tops together, and fastened them securely.

While his attention was absorbed in doing this, Britomarte, unperceived by him, took the tea-kettle, and carried it to the fountain, and filled it with water, and brought it to the fire.

And when Justin looked around with the intention of doing that job, he found it done to his hand.

'Ah why did you do that? I was not

thanking, as you should not have done it! Why did you?' demanded Justin, in a voice of gentle remonstrance.

'Because one of the few privileges that law and custom leave to woman in that of preparing your meals!' said Britomarte, not bitterly or sarcastically, as she usually spoke of these things, but sweetly and cordially.

'But do you not know that while it gives me pain to see you perform these labours, it would give me pleasure to perform them for you?' he said.

'Perhaps I might say the same of myself, Justin!' she said.

He looked up with a smile. It gave him more a thrill of delight to hear her call him by his Christian name.

'Justin,' she repeated, earnestly, 'all services that I cannot perform for myself, I will accept freely and gratefully from you. But everything that I can do, either for myself or you, you must let me undertake. I will not be contradicted else.'

'Will you be contented?' he inquired.

'Yes,' she replied.

'Then have your will in that, as in all other things, my ——' He was about to say 'my dearest,' but he caught himself in time, and said, 'my sister.'

'Indade, thin, and ye'll not have your will, if that manes toting water and filling tay-kettles, and meself to the fore. Sure what would I be doing wid me two hands intoirely, and you working like a nagur?' said Judith, indignantly, and slashing away at the bacon she was slicing, as if that had been the antagonist she was disputing with.

'Ah, but, Judith, we are all free and equal on this island, if we never were anywhere else, you know,' said Miss Conyers, mischievously.

'Ah, Lord keep us! will ye be laiving that into me teeth again? Sure didn't I ate me words whin the gintleman brought me me tay? Faix, let who will be free and equil, so I get me mate and tay. Troth m self thinks all the riots and the politics comes iv people being hungry or thirsty for one thing or another. Ah, thin, will ye have them eggs alone, itself, till I've done spoiting the mate? Sure I don't belave ye'll know more iv frying bacon and egg than ye will iv soiling the shirts you're always after talking about!' cried Judith, dropping the pieces of bacon, and running to take the eggs from Britomarte.

'Perhaps you are right, Judith my girl, but I know at least how to make an omelette, and you must be so good as not to interfere with me,' replied Miss Conyers, kindly but resolutely.

'Ah, bedad she'll quare it over us here as she did in the ship!' said Judith, going away.

Britomarte made the omelette, and when it was done, turned it into a hot plate and covered it up and set it by the fire to keep warm. Then she toasted some of the biscuits, and made the coffee. And while Judith fried the rashers, Britomarte spread the table-cloth on the grass, and arranged the miscellaneous breakfast service upon it.

'I think that very few shipwrecked passengers would be able to get so good a breakfast as we are about to make,' said Justin, with a smile.

'Again, thanks to you, Mr. Rosenthal. You must have struggled hard to procure us this breakfast this morning,' said Britomarte, sweetly.

'I did not feel it. I went and came on "winged feet," as Homer has it. I never had so happy a morning in my life, my dearest——sister!'

Judith set the coffee pot and the various dishes on—not the table, but the table cloth, and then she withdrew to make herself a good pot of tay.

Justin and Britomarte sat down upon the ground, and took their breakfast pic-nic or gipsy fashion. She poured out his coffee, and he helped her to the most delicate bits of the bacon; and he tasted and praised the omelette.

Judith, watching this pair, and seeing how they enjoyed the breakfast in each other's society, heaved a great sigh and murmured:

'Ah, if meself had but Tom-Tom Tom forninst me, I might be happy too. But sure we must be content,' she added philosophically, inhaling the fine fragrance of the tea in the tea-pot, as she poured the boiling water on to it. 'And how any Christian bail a haythen can drink thick, mucky, bilious coffee when they can get beautiful tay is more nor I know,' added the tea-worshipper, as she turned up her nose at the rich aroma that steamed up from the pot of excellent coffee Britomarte had made.

The breakfast was very leisurely eaten. It was a pleasure to linger over that tete-a-tete meal, and it was prolonged as much as possible.

When it was over, Britomarte and Justin withdrew from it, leaving Judith to her undisputed privilege of washing up the service.

'The first thing to be done,' said Justin, as they walked away, 'is to provide shelter. There is no time to be lost before it is done. The grotto, if it be true, is better than the open sky, and it will enough at night. The

disadvantage is that it must be too dark to be occupied during the day, though that would not matter much in such fine weather as this, when you would be naturally out in the open air nearly all the time. But how is the grotto, as a temporary dwelling place? I only looked into the hole when I passed it in the day, and when I entered it last night it was too dark to be seen.'

'The grotto is not near so dark as one would naturally suppose. In the first place, the hole at the entrance lets in a great flood of light, which the white and glistening walls strongly reflect. And in the second place, there is a large irregular fissure in the rocks overhead that gives admission to an oblique sunbeam, but which, I think, would keep out rain. Come and see,' said Miss Conyers, leading the way to the grotto.

Justin followed her, and both entered the place.

And now I must take this opportunity to describe the grotto, which was to be Britomarte's dwelling place until her first rude cabin would be raised by the hands of her lover.

This grotto was at the inland base of that long mountain that Justin crossed in coming from the causeway to the centre of the island. It was entered by a hole about seven feet high by three broad. Around this hole, and up the entire side of the mountain, the whole surface was richly clothed with a thicket of shrubs and saplings wherever they could find root held in the soil between the rocks, and it presented a most beautiful appearance. In front of the grotto was the small natural opening in the woods, where our little party had made their fire and eaten their breakfast.

Passing in through this hole of the rock, or doorway of the grotto, as it might be called, Justin and Britomarte found themselves in a spacious cave, of oval form and great natural beauty. The floor was nearly level, and the walls rose in the form of a dome, in the top of which was a fissure that let in the sun, and floor and walls were all of the most brilliant white stone that reflected back the sun-light, with the lustre of frosted silver. The whole size of the place was about that of a large family drawing-room.

'It is a palace for a fairy!—a bower for a queen!' said Justin in admiration.

And then they turned and left the grotto to look after Judith.

CHAPTER XXV.

SAVING THE STORES.

Though shaggy are the walls and roof,
With branches intertwined,
Yet smooth is all within, rain-proof
And delicately lined.
A hearth is there, and wooden dish,
And cups in seemly rows,
And couch all ready to a wish
For comfort and repose.

—*Wordsworth.*

'The next thing to do,' said Justin, as they joined Judith at the fire, 'is to get all the stores from the wreck. After I have secured them I may bring away as much of everything else that may be useful to us as I can move before the ship breaks up.'

'It is a great labour that you propose for yourself,' said Britomarte, gravely.

'And absolutely necessary labour, and therefore to be undertaken and accomplished,' replied Justin, smiling.

'You must let us take our share of the work.'

'My dear—sister, I mean—the task will be much too labourious for you. The causeway over which all these things have to be brought is no McAdamized avenue, I assure you.'

'For all that, Justin, you traversed it; and you know that I must make the attempt. If I fail, I will very quietly yield the point and leave all the labour to yourself alone.'

'Well, well,' said Justin, laughing. 'You are "queen o'er yourself" and all things else here. You must work you own will.'

'And sure here's meself, wid me two hands to the fore, ready to fetch and carry wid the best iv yez!'

'Thank you, Judith, I had certainly counted on your help,' said Rosenthal. 'And now—sister—shall we set forth?' he inquired, turning towards Britomarte.

'If you please,' said Miss Conyers.

Justin looked up through the trees towards the blazing sky. For though this was January, yet they were in a climate where that month answers to our July.

'It is very hot and growing hotter; and I dare say you did not bring a bonnet with you, when you landed on this island?' he inquired, with a droll look.

'I dare say I did not,' smiled Britomarte.

But Judith took up the matter in grand gravity:

'Bonnet?' she echoed. 'Sure mine was lost itself in a fray fight wid the sea!—Bonnet? Faix it was all I could do at all.

at all to kape the hair itself on me head, let alone bonnets!'

'Then we must improvise some defence for your heads against this sun,' said Mr. Rosenthal, looking around. 'Ah! I have it! the palm leaves! nothing could be better!' he exclaimed, starting off on a run through the thicket towards the grove of cocoa palms.

'Ah, sure what would we do without him, at all, at all! Troth, we hadn't even a dacent meal's victuals till he come to our relaif, as we hadn't. Sure we'd perish intirely only for him,' said Judith, looking gratefully in the direction where Justin had disappeared.

The man-hater did not reply. There was no controverting Judith's words. Perhaps also they expressed Britomarte's own thoughts. What indeed though one was brave and the other strong, could these two women have done, for self-preservation, left alone on this desert island, without the help of the one man Providence had sent to their assistance?

Justin soon returned, bearing large palm-leaves, which, with some natural dexterity, he doubled and shaped into a rude sort of hoods, more remarkable for utility than for beauty.

'There,' he said, 'they are not in the latest Parisian style of ladies' bonnets, I am afraid, but they will keep the sun off, and to do that is the purpose for which they were formed. I hope we may all answer the end of our creation as well.'

When they were about to start, the little dog, seeing symptoms of a move, began jumping and frisking around them, to testify his approbation of the journey and his willingness to share it.

'No you don't, my fine little fellow. I have had enough of crossing the causeway with you. I had rather carry a two-year old child at once. We'll leave you here,' said Justin, looking about for some means of confining the dog.

To 'leave him' there was easier to say than to do. They might have tied him to a tree, only they had neither rope nor chain. Or they might have shut him up in the grotto, only they had no door to close against his exit.

At length a bright idea struck Justin. He took his handkerchief from his pocket, rubbed it well upon his own face and hands and laid it down on the ground, and called the little dog and said:

'Fidele, Fidele!—watch it!'

And the loyal little creature ran and put his fore-paws upon it and stood looking 'faithful unto death' with all his might.

'Come—we can go now,' said Justin. 'Our way leads up the mountain, immediately over the roof of your grotto, sister; and the ascent is steep and rugged; and although you are not a very ancient lady, I think that you will find this staff serviceable; indeed, indispensable,' he added, handing to Miss Conyers a stick that he had cut for her use in climbing, and which she received with a smile of thanks.

He gave Judith a similar staff, and then they all set forth.

They ascended the mountain in a much shorter time than might have been expected.

When they reached the table land on the summit, Justin found a fragment of rock that would do for a seat, and advised Britomarte to sit down and rest.

Then he took out his telescope and adjusted it, and invited her to take a survey of their little kingdom—'For this island is our kingdom, my sister!—

"We are monarchs of all we survey—
Our rights there is none to dispute;
From the centre all round to the sea
We are lords of the bird and the brute."

'But how much happier we are than was poor solitary Robinson Crusoe, or his prototype, old Alexander Selkirk!' said Justin, placing the telescope in her hands, as she arose and stood beside him. 'Rest the glass upon my shoulder to steady it, and then look,' he added, placing himself in a convenient position as a telescope-stand.

She adjusted the instrument according to his advice, pointing it towards the wreck, which she saw distinctly wedged in the cleft of the rock at the end of the causeway.

'Poor ship! I lament her fate almost as if she were a human being doomed to death. For, of course, she's doomed. She must break up sooner or later,' said Britomarte.

'Yes, sooner or later,' replied Justin, contemplatively; 'and it seems even the greater pity, because, as she lay now, she is really not injured beyond repair, were the means of repairing her at hand. However, she will hold together the longer for being hurt no worse.'

Britomarte now lifted the end of the telescope from Justin's shoulder, and taking it in both her own hands supported it thus while she made a survey of the whole circle of the horizon. Some minutes passed in this review, during which no one spoke. Britomarte was the first to break silence.

'A wilderness surrounded by the sea; a desert in the midst of the ocean! It is magnificent—it is sublime in its

utter isolation and perfect solitude!' she said, lowering her glass.

'It is,' answered Justin, reflecting her of the telescope. 'Yet let Providence give me the time, strength and opportunity, and this wilderness shall bloom and blossom as the rose, this desert become a beautiful home. This island shall be a new Eden, of which we shall be the new Adam and Eve. Yes! for all that has come and gone, we shall be very happy here——Sister!'

He brought himself up with a jerk by this last word. His fancy had been running away with him, until he saw the clouds gathering upon the man-hater's brow, when he suddenly pulled up with—'Sister!'

'Shall we go on?' asked Britomarte.

'Certainly, if you are rested,' replied Justin.

And they resumed their journey, going down the mountain side towards the causeway.

'I think that we had all the necessaries and comforts, and many of the luxuries and elegancies of life on board of our ship, had we not?' inquired Justin, as they went on.

'Yes, of course; but you have some reason for asking that question, or rather for reminding me of those things. Now, what is your reason?' inquired Miss Conyers.

'Merely to follow up your answer by assuring you that you shall have all those necessaries, comforts, and perhaps luxuries and elegancies still.'

Britomarte looked up at him inquiringly.

'Nearly all these things remain yet upon the wreck. If it will only hold together for a month, I can, by diligence, convey them all to the land, and store them here. There is a chest of carpenter's tools in the forecastle; and there are building materials enough on the island. I can build you a very fair little house, and furnish it comfortably with the furniture I shall rescue from the cabin and state-rooms of the wreck. There is also a large assortment of grain and garden seeds, which poor Ely was carrying out with him to try the experiment of growing them on Indian soil. I will try the more promising experiment of planting them on your island. And then there are the animals to stock your farm. The cow, the pigs, the sheep, and the poultry—if I can only get them over the causeway. This—the removal of the animals—will certainly be the most difficult part of our enterprise. But if it is to be effected by any amount of labour and perseverance, I will effect it.'

'Sure, sir, did ye say as Cuddie is saved, the crayture?' inquired Judith, who was tagging on after them as fast as she could.

'Cuddie!' echoed Mr. Rosenthal, with an air of perplexity.

'Yes, sir, sure—Cuddie, the captain's cow itself, the crayture! I was asking you, is she saved, sir?'

'Oh, yes,' laughed Justin; 'I milked her this morning for your breakfast, you know, Judith. And, oh! by the way, I fed your cat and kittens, too, Judith. They also are quite safe.'

'Ah, thin, bad luck to thim! Are they safe itself, afther bringing their betthers to ruin sure? Farx, I wish they'd been drowned, so I do, the day I brought them on the ship to bring distruction on us all! Ah, bedad! we'll lave them where they are, and not bring a bit of them off at all at all.'

'But that would be cruel, Judith. And as for myself, I shall not leave the smallest living creature to perish on the ship, if any effort of mine will save it.'

'Ah, thin, sure would ye bring thim divil's imps on the land to bring us to distruction over again?'

'People can't be brought to destruction "over again," my good girl.'

'Oh, can't they though, asther? Sure ourselves was brought to distruction once be the shipwreck, and we may be brought to distruction over again be laughing hastes or ilse be cannibals—Whist! Lord kape us! where are yes agoing to at all at all?' gasped Judith, breaking off suddenly in her discourse, and stopping short in her progress upon the brink of one of those chasms that cut the causeway across.

'Don't be frightened, Judith. Stand just where you are until I help Miss Conyers over to the other side, and then I will come back for you,' said Justin, who was carefully supporting Britomarte in her difficult descent down one side of the steep.

When he had lifted her across the stream at the bottom, and helped her to climb the other side, and seen her safe upon the top, he returned to fetch Judith.

'Troth, I've heard tell iv the divil's highway, but niver saw it before; and sure this must be itself!' said Judith, as she gave her hand to Mr. Rosenthal, and clambered awkwardly down the descent.

When he had conveyed Judith safely to the other side of the chasm, they all three resumed their walk. Several of these chasms they crossed in the same manner. And finally they reached the ship, which remained in the state in which Justin had left it.

Mr. Rosenthal handed Miss Conyers on deck; and then helped Judith up beside her.

Britomarte looked around with sorrowful

reminiscences of that dire calamity which had separated her from all her late companions.

'I never expected to tread these planks again. It seems strange to be here. It seems almost wrong to be here, as if we had no right to be alive, now that all our fellow voyagers are lost. I cannot rejoice in being saved, remembering their destruction,' she murmured.

'We do not know that they have been destroyed. I think it highly probable that the boat which first left the ship's side—the boat containing the missionary party—was saved,' said Justin, with the purpose of consoling her.

'Why do you think so?'

'Because it was the most seaworthy boat of the two, and it was manned by a more knowing crew, and, finally, because they had sense enough to sail for the open sea, instead of making for that fatal rock-bound coast upon which your boat was wrecked.'

'Oh, heaven grant they may have been saved!' fervently exclaimed Britomarte.

'Oh, the poor ould ship! Oh, me poor ould daddy! Oh, me darlint Foretop Tom. Are yez all lost intirely? Drowned in the daps say? Oh, my fine ship! Oh, me good daddy! Oh, me gay Tom! Ow-oo! Ow-oo! Ow-oo!' cried Judith, sitting down upon the deck, flinging her apron over her head, rocking herself to and fro, and howling dismally.

And as she was howling, not only from an acute feeling of grief, but also from a profound sense of propriety, there was not the least use of any one's attempting to console her.

Britomarte laid her hand gently upon the woman's head, and kept it there a moment as a tacit assurance of sympathy, and then passed on.

To get into the cabin, she was obliged first to climb up the leaning deck, and then go round to the companion ladder and climb down.

Justin helped her as much as she would allow him to do.

Looking around upon the empty cabin had the vacant state-rooms, lately the home of herself and her fellow-voyagers, she was almost overwhelmed by the realization of the awful calamity that had befallen them.

She wondered why it was that she could not weep; but she really could not! the feeling of awe overpowered the feeling of grief, and besides the pressure of necessity was upon her—the necessity of immediate action.

She went into the state-room and changed all her clothing, and from her good stock of wearing apparel, which she found in excellent preservation, she selected two more changes; then she took her sewing materials—needles, thread, scissors and thimble, and her little toilet service—combs, brushes, soap and towels, and she rolled all these articles up together in a compact little parcel, and tied it up in a pocket handkerchief. And while doing this, she experienced a feeling of compunction for taking off anything for her own individual comfort only, when so much needed to be carried off for the general good. But then, again, she reflected that the common decencies of life, no less than her own inclination, made it absolutely necessary that she should provide herself with the means of personal neatness and cleanliness.

By the time she had made up her little parcel, Judith, who had finished her performance on deck, and so satisfied her sense of what was expected from her, came stumbling down the companion ladder.

And Judith's cat and kittens, recognizing their mistress, jumped out of the spare state-room and ran up to her, purring and lifting their little tails, and rubbing their sides against her feet.

But Judith made short work with them all.

'Ah, thin, get out iv me way, ye divil's bastes. Sure if it wasn't bad luck to kill cats, I'd haive the whole iv yez into the say, so I would!' she cried, lifting them one by one upon her foot, and tossing them away as fast and as far as she could.

And then she went in turn to all the state-rooms except Britomarte's.

'Sure I suppose I may help meself to everything that you doesn't want here? For sure what you won't take lies betwane meself and the say. And if meself don't take it, the say will. And the rightful owners will never want it at all, at all! Say, ma'am!'

'Judith,' said Miss Conyers, doubtfully, 'if I understand what you mean by so many "selfs," you are asking my leave to take what you want from this cabin?'

'Sure you ma'am, that's just what I mane itself!'

'Then I have no right either to give or withhold leave. Here we have equal privileges, and you must do as you please; or rather, you must act according to the dictates of your own conscience.'

'Sure, ma'am, I know better than that intirely. Sure I'm not going to act according to the dictates iv what's its name, nor anything else at all, at all. I'm going to do as ye bid me. Faix, meself know we are

both depending on the gentleman to save us from perishing entirely. And troth, ye can wind the gentleman around yer fingers, so ye can, and so, bedad, it behooves me to do as ye say, since he's king and you're quane.'

'So,' thought the man-hater to herself, 'what power I possess in virtue of superior intellect and education goes for nothing with this, my only female companion; but what power I possess, through my interest with this one able-bodied male creature, is all in all, because, forsooth, we are both dependent upon him (with his physical superiority) to save us from perishing. Why, the physical superiority is a quality he possesses in common with the ox and the ass! Yes; but the ox and the ass have not physical superiority united to intellectual power as he has. A drove of axen or asses could not save us, as this one man can. Bah! nature has been very unjust to women, and that is the sacred truth! She should have given us strong bodies to match our strong hearts and heads!'

'And ye have niver tould me whether or no I may take what I like,' said Judith.

'Then I tell you now: Judith, help yourself.'

'Thanky, ma'am! Sure it's a privilege I niver had before in all me life; but, thanks to the shipwreck, I have it now! Sure it's an ill wind that blows nobody good,' said Judith, going into Mrs. Ely's room, and beginning to rummage over that poor woman's finery with great satisfaction.

Mary Ely having been the daughter of a wealthy merchant, had as large and as rich a stock of wearing apparel as any woman in the middle class of life could wish to possess; and Judith overhauled it with great enjoyment.

'Ah, what an illigant shawl!' she cried, holding up a fine, large, camel's hair wrap. 'What an illigant shawl entirely to wear to mass. What would Fore-Top Tom think iv me in this? And sure won't it astonish them all whin I wear it. Father O'Neil may talk as much as he likes about the lilies of the field and Solomon in all his glory; but sure I'll wear this shawl to mass if I have to make up for it wid a thousand "Hail Mary's." But sure there's no mass nor no church on that, baste iv an island, and I should only wear it for that laughing divil to grin at. But, ah! what a darlint iv a green silk dhress, and how beautiful it will go with the shawl, sure! Look, ma'am!' she exclaimed, rushing up to Miss Conyers, and holding up the shawl in one hand and the dress in the other for inspection.

Britemarts turned away, revolted at the woman's exhibition of thoughtlessness or heartlessness. If one of the common enemy had acted as Judith did in this matter, Britemarts would have poured upon him the full measure of her scorn and indignation; but with her own sex she was ever most merciful and forbearing.

'Look, ma'am—oh, look! the beautiful red shawl and the green silk dhress. Sure ye niver set eyes on 'em before! She'd niver be wearing the like iv these on the deck, to be spoilt intirely wid the salt say wather. Look, ma'am,' persisted Judith, too much absorbed in her own delight to observe the pained expression of Miss Conyers' countenance.

'Oh, Judith! how can you? Don't—don't!' was all that she could reply.

But it was enough; for in an instant the consciousness of her own seeming want of heart flashed upon Judith's mind, and quite overwhelmed her with remorse. She dropped the finery, flung herself down upon the floor in a sitting position, threw her apron over her head, and began to rock her body to and fro, crying:

'Oh, the baste that I was! Oh, the hay then I made iv meself! Oh, the divil I was turning into wid me vanity and hardness iv heart. To be enjoying ov the property before iver graving for the dead! Oh, the poor young craythur, cut off in the bloom iv her youth! Sure she was the core iv me heart and the light iv me eye. But I shall niver see her again—niver. She's gone! gone! gone!—lost in the salt say wather! Ow-oo! ow-oo! ow!— Och-hone! och-hone! och-hone!'

As Judith set in for a regular bout of rocking and howling—not by any means in the spirit of hypocrisy, but as a matter of business, from a sense of duty, and with a feeling of some little sorrow which she was conscientiously trying to increase.

Miss Conyers liked this performance quite as little as she had the other; but as she was not a habitual fault-finder, she said nothing.

Meanwhile on deck Justin had collected together as many stores as the united strength of himself and party could carry to the shore.

And now he came down the companion ladder and inquired:

'Are you ready to return, sister?'

'Quite,' answered Miss Conyers. Then turning to her companion, she said: 'Come, Judith, my good girl, compose yourself, and make up your bundle. We have got to go on shore.'

'Is the gintleman ready?' inquired Judith, dropping her apron from her head

and revealing a red, swollen, tear-stained face.

'Yes, Judith, and waiting. Let me help you up.

'Sure couldn't he wait a little longer, while I give the poor young crayture, whose clothes I'm going to wear, her dues of grieving for her?' whimpered the woman.

'I could wait, my good girl, but the tide won't; in an hour from this it will cover the causeway,' said Mr. Rosenthal.

'Ah, thin, ma'am, help me up, and I'll be obleeged to ye. Sure I can finish my graving some other time, whin I'm at leisure! But faix sure I niver sit mesilf down for a dutiful spell of graving but what I'm interrupted in it! Twice it was the laughing hants! Now it's the tide! But I'll finish some other time,' said Judith, wiping her eyes and giving her hand to Miss Conyers, who helped her to rise.

'There, Judith, you are all right now,' said Britomarte.

'Thankey, ma'am! Sure I wouldn't throuble ye, only my limbs bend under me wid the grief I'm failing for the poor young crayture, who has left me her clothes,' said Judith, trying hard to feel as badly as she dressed she did.

Nevertheless, she was very particular in making up her bundle of finery, which was so large that she could afford Mr. Rosenthal but little assistance in conveying a part of the effects that he had gathered together. But at length she managed to tie her bundle on her back and take a box of tea on her head. And so she followed Mr. Rosenthal and Miss Conyers, who were both laden with as much as they could carry.

CHAPTER XXVI.

MYSTERY.

Before I trust my fate to thee,
Or place my hand in thine,
Before I let thy future give
Colour and form to mine—
Before I peril all for thee,
Question thy soul to-night for me.

Look deeply now! If thou canst find
Within thy inmost soul
That thou hast kept a portion back,
While I have staked the whole;
Let no false pity spare the blow,
But in true mercy tell me so.

—*Anon.*

We must leave our three shipwrecked voyagers on the desert island, and return on the wings of thought to look after their friends left behind at home.

While the missionary ship had been sailing towards the sun and towards the reef, our ship of State, our beloved nation, was also sailing towards the sun and towards the reef—towards the glorious sun of emancipation, towards the fatal reef of disunion. I shall not burden this light and simple story with the politics of civil war. I shall only allude to it where it immediately concerns the people of whom I am writing.

When, in October, the missionary ship sailed from the United States, disunion was not dreamed of, except by a few leading politicians. But after the election of Mr. Lincoln in November, and before any overt act of secession took place, it is now well known that secret meetings were held in Washington, Richmond, Annapolis, and all the principal cities in the Border States, to take measures to prepare the people of those States to act promptly and in concert when the opportunity for seceding should present itself. But the foremost object of this conspiracy was to muster into Maryland and Virginia a secret military force strong enough to seize and occupy Washington, and prevent the President elect from taking his seat there.

Among the most active, secretive and persevering of these sea pirators was the accomplished scholar, soldier and statesman whom I have introduced to you, my readers, under the name of Colonel Eastworth.

You know already that during the greater part of the summer of that year, he was in Washington, ostensibly on a visit to his father's friend and his own old tutor, the retired Lutheran minister. In September he left the city to return to his home in the South. In October he re-appeared in Washington, and took rooms in one of the best hotels frequented by southern gentlemen. But while he made Washington his headquarters, he went on frequent journeys to Charleston, Richmond, Annapolis, and other cities. And not even to his betrothed did he ever mention the object of these sudden journeys.

Such was his manner of life until the first of December, when, as usual at the meeting of Congress, the city became crowded with visitors. All the boarding houses and hotels were full of people, and very full of discomfort.

Colonel Eastworth, a constitutional sybarite and epicurean, escaped as often as he could from the crowded rooms and mouldy meals of his 'best hotel,' to the quiet flowers and dainty table of the Lutheran minister's home. Colonel Eastworth was certainly no petulant fault-finder; yet in his close

intimacy with the family of his betrothed, he sometimes let fall half-laughing expressions that betrayed how intensely uncomfortable he was when in his quarters at the 'best hotel.'

Doctor Rosenthal, in his earnest German nature, considered betrothal almost as sacred as marriage, and looked upon the betrothed lover of his daughter as already his own son. And so, one day, when they chanced to meet in the Capitol library, and the colonel was unusually sarcastic on the subject of hotel living, the minister said:

'Now, confess, Eastworth. We have a very large house, with four rooms on a floor, and sixteen rooms in all, counting basement and attics, and only myself and my daughter and our two servants to occupy them. Now, as you are to pass the whole winter in Washington, what should hinder you from coming and stopping with us?'

'Thanks. Really, you are very kind; but circumstances, as you know to the contrary notwithstanding, I did not mean to angle for and draw out this invitation,' laughed the colonel.

'Don't I know that you didn't? But you will come?'

'It would be too great a trespass on your kindness.'

'Nonsense! not at all! You are one of us! You are my son. And really, now, Eastworth, I want you to come.'

'A thousand thanks! I shall be too glad to do so! I accept your kindness as frankly as it is offered.'

'That is right. And now I will go home and tell Erminie to have fires lighted in your rooms, to air them comfortably for you against your arrival. She will be glad, I know. But—when shall we expect you? This evening, shall it not be?'

Colonel Eastworth hesitated, smiled, and then replied:

'This evening? Yes, if you please, if it will be convenient for you. There is really no reason on my part for delay.'

'Nor on mine! nor on Erminie's! nor on the servants'; I do not wish to boast of our housekeeping, Eastworth, but I take pleasure in telling you that we are always prepared to receive our friends. And if to-night we should be surprised by the sudden arrival of a tribe of cousins as numerous as a Scotch clan, it could not put us out in the least. There now! come when you like! Come home with me now, if you choose, and send a messenger to the hotel to direct your servants to pack up your property and follow you!' said the minister, cordially.

'Many thanks; but I must return to my room first. I will join you at your tea-table.'

'Very well! Then I will expect you,' said the minister, as cordially as if he himself had received a favour.

They parted for a few hours. Col. Eastworth, for many reasons deeply gratified with this project, returned to his hotel, to prepare for his removal to his new quarters.

Dr. Rosenthal, pleased with the thought of giving pleasure to others, hastened home to inform his daughter of the plan, and to get ready for his guest.

Erminie was delighted. It had come to this pass with the minister's gentle child—that she only seemed to live in the presence of her lover; and to have him always under the same roof with herself seemed to be the perfection of happiness. She could ask no more than that of earth or heaven. And what comfort she took in preparing for his arrival! Col. Eastworth, like most middle-aged gentlemen of a certain class, was an epicure, and his betrothed bride knew it. First, she went to the kitchen and gave the cook very particular directions concerning the preparation of certain dainty dishes sure to delight the fastidious palate of the expected guest.

Then she called the house-maid, and went to get the spare rooms ready for his accommodation.

Dr. Rosenthal's house was a large, square, brick building, standing on its own grounds, which, even in winter, looked very bright and cheerful with its many evergreens. There were long vine-shaded porches before every floor in front of the house, which was of three stories, with basement and attics. There was a large hall running from front to back through the centre of each floor, and having two rooms on each side. The basement contained the kitchen, laundry, servants' room, and cellar. The first floor contained, on the right hand of the broad entrance hall, the long drawing-rooms, connected or divided at will by sliding doors; and on the left hand, the family library in front, and the dining-room back.

The second floor contained, on the right of the hall, the minister's private apartments, consisting of a bed-chamber and a study; and on the left, Erminie's bed-room and private sitting-room.

The third floor comprised two suites of spare rooms, neatly furnished and well kept, for the accommodation of visitors.

To this third floor, Erminie, attended by her handmaid, repaired. She opened the front windows of the left suite of rooms, letting in a flood of sunlight to the beauti-

ful parlour, while her attendant knelt down before the grate and began to light the fire, which was already kept ready laid for kindling. Everything was in such exquisite order that there was but little else to be done than to warm and air the rooms. But when the fire was burning brightly, Erminie drew the sofa up on one side of the hearth, and the easy chair up on the other, and placed a foot-stool and a sofa-stand before each.

Then she went down into the library, and brought up the magazines of the month and the papers of the day, and placed them on the centre-table.

And, finally, she went to the conservatory and gathered a few choice winter roses and geraniums and placed them in a green-green Bohemian vase, and brought it and set it on the mantel-piece, where the fragrance of the flowers filled the room.

Then, leaving her handmaid to prepare the adjoining bed-chamber, she went down to put a few graceful finishing touches to the arrangements of the drawing-room, library and dining parlour.

Next to the delight of a mother preparing for the visit of her son, is the delight of a girl preparing for the comfort of her betrothed lover.

Erminie shared her father's religious belief in the sacredness and inviolability of betrothal; and she seemed to herself little less than a wife making ready for the reception of her husband.

She ordered the tea-table to be set in the library; and never was a tea-table more exquisitely neat and dainty in all its arrangements than this which was prepared under the immediate supervision of the minister's daughter. She knew that the library was the favourite room with their visitor as well as with her father and herself. And never before did it look more inviting than on this evening when it was made ready to receive their most welcome guest.

The fire in the grate burned clearly, and its ruddy glow was reflected back by the amber-coloured window-curtains and chair-covers, and carpet, and by the gilded frames of the pictures that filled up the spaces between the book-cases on the walls, and by the silken cornice on the elegant bookcases.

When Erminie had seen these arrangements completed, she contemplated the effect with a smile of satisfaction, and then went to make her own toilet.

Erminie's dressing-room door was the evening away, on their return to the room, was ajar. On this occasion she dressed herself in such rich elegant style as might high rank and large means always afford and trimmed with light blue velvet ribbons. She wore her rich auburn hair in natural ringlets and without a single ornament, a simple toilet, but perfectly in keeping with her own delicate beauty.

When she was quite ready she went down into the library, where she was now joined by her father, and where they awaited the arrival of their visitor.

Colonel Eastwoith came in good time. Erminie's quick ears were the first to catch the sound of the carriage wheels as they turned into the gate and rolled up the avenue towards the house.

Dr. Rosenthal himself went out to receive the guest and show him to his room.

Erminie, who had been so very busy in preparing for him, was now seized with a strange timidity, which prevented her from going forth to welcome him. But she rang for the house-maid to show Colonel Eastworth's servant where to carry his master's trunk, and then she went back to the library and sat down to wait until her father should return with her lover.

In a few minutes they came down stairs and entered the room.

Erminie half arose to receive her betrothed. She saw his look of appreciation and approbation as he glanced around the room before his eye fell upon herself, and he advanced towards her.

'This looks like a little paradise, after the pandemonium in which I have lately existed. A paradise, of which my lady is the Peri,' he murmured, in a low voice, as he lifted her hand, and bowing over it, pressed it to his lips.

Erminie blushed beautifully and murmured something in reply to the effect that she hoped he would be happy with them.

'Humph!' thought the good minister to himself—'that is all very high-toned, I dare say; but for my part, I had rather soon him kiss her openly and heartily, as an honest sweetheart and betrothed husband should! But then very likely he is right and I am an old-fashioned fogy!'

'Are you ready for tea, good dear?' inquired Erminie, with her hand upon the bell.

'Yes, yes—quite; and so is Eastworth. Ring it in directly.

Erminie rang, and tea was immediately served. Everything was in perfect neatness and taste. Colonel Eastworth's favourite delicacies stood on the table. Erminie presided over the urn, and the evening passed swiftly and pleasantly.

A beautiful sentiment in the lovely lady

of the hotel ordinary?' said Eastworth, frankly.

'You should not be too hard upon the hotels. How is it possible they should be any better than they are, in their present overcrowded state,' said the charitable minister.

And then their conversation left the hotel grievance and turned upon more agreeable subjects.

When tea was over and the service cleared away, Erminie brought out Gustave Doré's illustrations of Don Quixote, and laid the volume on the table.

It was a rare work and a new purchase, and it had cost the good minister a round sum to import it from Paris. But Erminie had expressed a wish to possess it; and her father never denied his beloved daughter anything that she wanted which it was possible for him to procure. So here it lay upon the table; at this time perhaps the only copy of the work to be found in America.

Colonel Eastworth had never seen it; so Erminie had the delight of being the first to show it to him.

There are perhaps about a hundred large plates—each plate being a perfect work of art, to be studied separately and carefully and with ever increasing appreciation and enjoyment of its truthfulness to nature and richness in humour.

In the examination of this book the hours sped so quickly that ten o'clock, the regular bed-time of the quiet household, came and passed unheeded.

But if the striking of the clock did not disturb our laughing party, something else soon after did—the ringing of the street door bell.

Dr. Rosenthal himself went out to see what this very late summons might mean.

It was the penny postman of his district. And the minister started; for this was an unheard-of hour for the penny postman to present himself.

'Yes, doctor, it is I,' said the man, handing a letter to the minister. 'You see it came by the late mail, and being a foreign letter, I thought it might be from your son who went out to the Indies, and so I thought I wouldn't keep you waiting for it until the regular delivery to-morrow morning; but I would just step round with it to-night.'

'A thousand thanks, my friend. It is from my son. It is in his handwriting. A thousand thanks! this is a real act of kindness, which I shall never cease to remember,' said the minister, earnestly, as he received the letter.

'Oh, don't mention such a trifle, doctor. Good-night sir,' said the kind-hearted penny postman, taking himself off.

'Erminie, my dear, here is a letter from your brother!' exclaimed the minister, bursting into the library with all the vehemence of a school-boy.

'Oh!' cried his daughter, jumping up to meet him.

And for the time being Colonel Eastworth was 'left out in the cold.'

'Ah! pray excuse us, sir! Have we your permission?' inquired the minister, suddenly recollecting himself and bowing to his guest.

'Oh, certainly, certainly. Am I not one of yourselves? pray do not mind me,' replied Colonel Eastworth, smiling, and then turning his whole attention to Gustave Doré which lay still before him.

Dr. Rosenthal opened the letter, and then the father and daughter held it between them, bent their heads over it and read it together.

It was the first letter they had received from Justin,—the letter that he had written and mailed at Porto Praya. It merely told them of the ship's prosperous voyage and safe arrival at Porto Praya, and of the well-being of all the passengers.

'He does not seem to have made much progress in his love-chase, however,' said Dr. Rosenthal.

'Papa dear, I think his delicate respect for his lady-love would prevent him from writing on the subject, even to us, suggested Erminie.

'Well, may be so, my dear. There seems to me to be a great deal of false delicacy in love affairs now-a-days. I hope there is as much true durability.'

'I wonder why Britomarte did not write to me,' murmured Erminie, with a grieved look.

'She probably has done so; these foreign mails, especially from small foreign ports, are very irregular and uncertain. And your letter may have been altogether lost or only delayed,' said the minister.

'Justin writes that we need no expect to hear from him again until he reaches and writes from the Cape of Good Hope?'

'Yes, indeed, he says, between the Cape-Verde Islands and the Cape of Good Hope, they should speak a homeward bound ship, in which case he would dispatch a letter by her. But now,' said the minister, dropping his voice, 'we must put up our letter and [illegible] our visitor.'

'I hope you have had good news from my friend Justin and his party,' said Colonel Eastworth, as they joined him at the table.

'Excellent! They have had a very prosperous voyage so far as Porto Praya, with every prospect of a continuance of fine weather, thank Heaven! There, you can see what he says, if you will take the trouble to look over his letter,' said the minister, putting the paper into the visitor's hands.

'Thanks,' said Colonel Eastworth with a bow. Then he drew Erminie to his side, so that she could look over the letter again with him, and opened it, saying, with a smile:

'I know, of course, that you cannot read this too often.'

'I believe you read my thoughts,' answered Erminie, with a beautiful blush.

And—I do wish I could read yours as well,' she added, gravely.

'I wish you could, my dearest. You would know then, for yourself, how perfectly I love you,' he replied, in a low whisper.

'I knew that already. I never for a moment doubted your love. What, indeed, but perfect love could draw you down to me?' murmured Erminie, in a voice tremulous with emotion.

'God bless you in your faith, my dearest! But why then, do you wish to read my thoughts?' inquired Colonel Eastworth, with a sidelong glance towards the minister, to see if he was attending to their conversation.

But no—Dr. Rosenthal was deep in the study of Gustave Dore.

'Why do you wish to read my thoughts, Erminie?' repeated her lover.

'Oh! I do not know. Sometimes when you have been here spending an evening alone with me, you have been so moody, so grave, so thoughtful, so absent-minded, so utterly oblivious of all around you; so utterly oblivious, even of me,' replied Erminie, sadly.

'Of you! Never, Erminie. Never, for an instant, better angel of my life!' exclaimed Eastworth warmly, though still in a suppressed voice. Then he paused and reflected for a few moments, and then he said:

'Sweet girl, I am no longer a young man, and middle age brings with it trials and responsibilities with which I do not wish to burden your gentle heart. No, Erminie, I am no longer a young man. I remember sometimes with pain, with grave misgivings—aye, almost with despair—that I am your senior for full twenty years!'

'Oh! why do you say that. I never knew and never asked myself whether you were thirty, or forty, or fifty. But I do know that I——' She broke down in the sweet confession she was trying to make, and dropped her head and hid her face upon his shoulder.

He encircled her waist with his arm, and stopped to whisper something.

Dr. Rosenthal glanced up over the tops of his spectacles, muttering to himself:

'Humph! so that is the way in which they read my son's letter?' and then he bent his head still lower over Gustave Dore, and became still more absorbed in study.

'Then you do not love me the less, because, like Othello, I am somewhat "declined into the vale of years?"' Eastworth asked.

'Oh, no, no, no! for "that's not much." And besides, what does the inspired writer you have just quoted say about that?

'"Let still the woman take
An elder than herself; so wears she to him,
So sways she level in her husband's heart;"'

murmured Erminie, lifting her head, blushing intensely at her own audacity in quoting Shakespeare upon such a subject.

'Yes,' answered Colonel Eastworth, involuntarily tightening his arms around her waist. 'Yes, dearest, supposing that the woman ever reasons coolly on the subject of her choice, so few women ever do, and as I am glad you do not. I wish you to love me for the woman's simple reason—because you love me. All other reasons are false! For if you love me for good looks, they will certainly change, and may possibly pall upon your sight even before they change! If for good qualities, you may discover that I do not possess them. Love me just because you love me, my dearest, so that you may never have cause to change.'

He spoke so low as scarcely to break the dead silence of the room—a silence which was so profound, that when the mantel clock began to strike it sounded like an alarm.

'Eleven o'clock! Bless my soul! Erminie, ring for the bed-room candles!' exclaimed the doctor, rousing himself.

Erminie obeyed. The housemaid appeared, with three little wax candles, in three little silver candlesticks.

'We have no gas in the bed-rooms. I consider it unhealthy. Good-night,' said the doctor, as he lighted a candle and handed it to his guest.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ERMINIE'S TRIALS.

Does there within thy dimmest dreams
A possible future shine,
Wherein thy life could henceforth breathe
Untouched—unshared by mine?
If so, at any cost, or cost,
Oh! tell me before all is lost!—

Is there within thy soul a need
That mine can not fulfil,
One chord that any other hand
Could better wake or still?
Speak now! lest at some future day
My whole life wither and decay.—*Anon.*

Erminie was a very lark for early rising. Summer and winter she was always up with the sun. Indeed, she purposely slept with the foot of her bed towards the east windows of her room and left her shutters unclosed, so that the earliest beams of the sun might shine in upon her and kiss her eyelids into light. It was so beautiful to be awakened each morning by the touch of the sun, she said.

It was her daily habit, very soon after the servants were astir, to be down stairs, busy with her household duties. From the time that she had been brought from school and installed in her position as the young mistress of her father's house, she became very appreciative of the responsibilities of that position, and gave her personal attention to the details of domestic economy. And she did this with so much success that the good minister had excellent reasons for boasting that they—himself and his daughter—were always prepared to receive their friends, and could never be so much taken by surprise as to be put to inconvenience by the sudden arrival of visitors at their house.

On the morning succeeding the domestication of Colonel Eastworth in the family, Erminie, restless with excess of happiness, arose even earlier than usual.

She went down into the library to open and air it, and to have the fire lighted and the table set for breakfast under her own supervision.

This was a peculiarly pleasant morning room, especially in winter; for it had an eastern aspect, and the newly risen sun shone brightly in at the windows. Here the minister's little family liked to breakfast as well as to sup. The communicating dining-room at the back was seldom used, except for its legitimate purpose of dining.

Erminie completed the arrangement of the room and of the table—even to the laying of the morning papers ready, so that her father and her lover might look over the news as they lingered over their coffee. And then she sat down and awaited their coming.

And half an hour later, when Doctor Rosenthal and Colonel Eastworth entered the room, a very pleasant scene greeted them.

The morning sun was shining brightly in, lighting up the glass book-cases and the silver service of the breakfast table. The fire burned clearly in the polished grate, and by its side sat Erminie in her soft white merino morning dress and rich auburn ringlets.

She arose, with a smile to greet her father and her lover.

Her father kissed her fondly and then took up a morning paper and appeared to become absorbed in its contents.

Her lover drew her away to the sunny window and whispered:

'My dearest, I recognized your loving care in every single arrangement for my comfort in my rooms last night. I knew it was this dear hand that wheeled my sofa in its place, and set the footstool, and even cut the leaves of the magazines upon the table. Shall I thank you for all this? No, sweet girl, I will not mock you so. But do you know, Erminie, that I sat up last night turning over all these magazines, merely because these dear fingers had touched them all?'

'I am so glad that you can be pleased with anything I can do for you, for, oh! it is so little I can do,' she murmured, softly.

'You can love me. You do love me, and that love of yours makes your slightest act for me a priceless service!' he replied, fervently pressing her hand to his lips.

'Hallo, Eastworth! what's this? what's this? what's this? what on earth are they about in the Senate?' suddenly cried out the old minister, staring at the paper in his hand.

'What is what, sir?' inquired Colonel Eastworth, leaving the side of Erminie, and going to join her father.

'This! this!' said the old minister, pointing emphatically to a lengthened report of the previous day's debate in the Senate. It was a warm debate between the Union and the Secession factions. Eastworth looked from the paper to the face of the reader, and his face grew dark.

'I am afraid, sir,' he said, 'that you do not look into the papers very often to keep up with the politics of the day.'

'No, no—I do not; I never did and never

shall. I always let the opposing parties fight out their own battles, having such firm faith in the glorious destinies of the country as to feel well assured that the very worst of them can never succeed in bringing it to ruin. My eyes only happened to fall upon this debate by chance. But I say, this looks a little serious, doesn't it? as if they really mean secession, eh?'

'I think the Southern States really mean it, sir,' said Eastworth.

The old minister reflected a moment, and then laughed, and threw the paper aside, exclaiming:

'Pooh! pooh! Eastworth! nonsense! a few crafty and unscrupulous politicians, who are willing to sacrifice their country so that they may rise into transient notoriety upon its ruins, may rant as they please, and a few hot-headed boys, who are ready for revolution or excitement of any sort, at any price, may be led astray by their sophistries. But the southern people at large, with their whole-hearted attachment to, and pride in, their country!—never, Eastworth, never; it is all talk, all dream, all moonshine! Nonsense!—Erminie, ring for breakfast, my dear!'

The old Lutheran minister was no politician; he was a philosopher and book-worm; but he was not alone in his incredulity. Even up to this late period, it was very difficult to make any sane man, not infected with the madness of the day, believe in the possibility of disunion.

Breakfast was served. But for some reason or other, the social morning meal did not pass off so cheerfully as it might have been expected to do. And as soon as it was over, Colonel Eastworth excused himself and went out.

Dr. Rosenthal lighted his pipe, and went on the front porch for his morning smoke and promenade, and thought no more about the stormy debates in the Senate.

And Erminie, who was no more of a politician than her father, and had no more misgivings about the safety of the national union than she had about the certainty of her own union with the husband of her choice, went gaily about her household business—ordered the dinner, put fresh flowers in the vases in the drawing-room, and then set down to her needle-work.

Yes; it was true, while a fierce political contest, the precursor of civil war, raged through the city, scarcely a rumour of the state of affairs passed the quiet threshold of the retired minister's home. He was, as I said before, a student and a philosopher; his time was passed among his books or in his garden. If he ever entered the Capitol, it was to go to the library and mouse among the dusty and forgotten tomes collected there; and never to go into the Senate or the House to listen to the debates. In a word, he was more familiar with the history of the ninth century than with the doings of the nineteenth. Politics were never discussed in his house; nor did he ever engage in them elsewhere. And, indeed, on the only occasion in which he dined out in that eventful winter, when the subject of the conversation was the Crittenden Compromise, the good minister came out with the following startling profession of faith:

'If Charlemagne had only succeeded in uniting the eastern and western empires by a marriage with the Empress Irene, it would have changed the destinies of the whole human race.'

At present it was lost to talk politics to Dr. Rosenthal; but the day was at hand when even he was to be aroused from his dreams.

To suit Col. Eastworth's known habits the dinner hour at the minister's house was changed from two o'clock to six, but Erminie took good care that her father should not suffer by the change; and she had his luncheon of stewed oysters and broiled birds punctually on the table at two.

Col. Eastworth came home to the late dinner. He was grave, absorbed, absent-minded. He sometimes shook off this preoccupation, but it was with an evident effort. There was no danger that he should talk politics with his host; he was very, very reticent on all public subjects.

After dinner, they withdrew to the drawing-room, where coffee was served, and then Dr Rosenthal took his pipe and went off to study to smoke and read.

Erminie was left alone with her betrothed. A sort of shyness, that she never could get rid of, when left tete-a-tete with her lover, induced her to rise and open the piano. She sang and played one after another, his favourite songs; and in many of them he joined his voice to her. At length she struck into the old, yet ever new, beloved, and all-inspiring 'Star-Spangled Banner.' She had sung the first stanza, and was striking into the chorus with all her heart and soul, expecting him to join her with all the ardour and enthusiasm of his southern nature, when suddenly he laid his hand upon her shoulder—his hand, that shook as with palsy:

'Not that! not that! oh, my dearest—not that, if you love me!' he exclaimed, in a voice that shook as much as did his hand.

She ceased playing, and turned around

and looked at him in meek surprise. She had never before in all their acquaintance seen him moved from his gentlemanly self-possession; but now he was terribly shaken. She was alarmed.

'Why?—why may I not sing the Star-Spangled Banner?' she faltered.

'I cannot bear it! My dearest, I cannot! Strong man that I thought myself, I cannot!' he exclaimed, with the same half-suppressed, tempestuous emotion.

'But why? Tell me why?' she persisted, with affectionate earnestness. 'You have fought gallantly for it; you have shed your priceless blood in its defence; you have won immortal fame under it; oh! why then may I not sing the praises of that glorious banner, so doubly dear to me for your sake?'

He was frightfully agitated.

'Oh, hush, Erminie, hush!' he cried.

'Ah! what has disturbed you so—what?' she exclaimed, rising from the piano and standing by his side.

He led her back to her chair by the fire, and threw himself into another near the centre-table, upon which he leaned, while he strove to subdue his dreadful emotion.

She could not bear this long. She arose and went to him, stood behind his chair, leaned over him and whispered:

'Oh, what is it that troubles you so? Tell me—tell me! Why should the singing of that song have shaken you so much?'

He put his hand out and drew her around to his side, and with his arm around her waist, holding her in a close embrace, he answered, with more composure than he had yet shown, but gravely and sadly:

'There are struggles, my Minie—divided duties—that tear and rend a man's soul asunder as wild horses might dismember a martyr's body!'

She laid her hand upon his brow; all her timidity was forgotten in her desire to console him; she pressed her lips to his forehead, and whispered:

'Your troubles are all mine; let me comfort you if I can. Show me how to do it, my dearest, oh! my dearest.'

'Some day, better angel of my life, I will tell you all. Not now! I cannot bear to do it; nor could you bear to hear it.'

'I can bear all things—all things for your sake! Try me——try me!—Say, is your trouble now connected with this dear old flag?'

'Yes; it is connected with——' He paused, and then, with a spasmodic effort, added—'the dear old flag! But enough! "Old things shall pass away, and all things shall become new!" We shall raise a banner, Erminie, in the blaze of whose young glory the old stars and stripes shall pale and fade, as the stars of night at the rising of the sun!'

'Oh, what do you mean? What are you about to do?' gasped Erminie, in a low voice, as she turned deadly pale.

'"Be innocent of the knowledge, dearest chuck, till you approve the deed!"' he answered, smiling and throwing off the gloom that had gathered around them.

And in good time he did so; for the door opened quietly, and the old doctor, who had finished his pipe, sauntered into the room, to spend the rest of the evening with his children, as he called these two.

Many more evenings did the betrothed lovers spend alone in that drawing-room. But not again did Erminie attempt to sing the Star Spangled Banner; and not again did Colonel Eastworth lose his self-possession, or hint darkly at the 'coming events' that cast their shadows over his spirit. As the scene of that evening was not repeated, Erminie let its memory fade from her mind, and she grew tranquil and happy in the society of her lover.

But Colonel Eastworth was neither happy nor even tranquil. An honourable gentleman, a patriotic citizen, and a distinguished soldier, who had won ever-living laurels in the service of his country, and now a State's Rights man, conscientiously plotting her ruin, his mind was torn by the struggles of what he called 'a divided duty,' and likened not unaptly to the martyrdom of dismemberment by wild horses. Nor did the society of his betrothed bride tend to soothe him.

He was too madly in love with the minister's beautiful child to bear the close intimacy of her constant companionship with anything like calmness—unless he could be permitted to marry her immediately.

One evening they were as usual alone in the drawing-room. She was seated at the piano, singing his favourite song. He was bending over her, turning the music, but thinking far more of her than of anything else. She was singing the refrain of that song so full and wild, and, almost despairing aspiration:

'Beloved eye! beloved star!
Thou art so near, and yet—so far!'

He bent lower over her, until his quick breath stirred her bright auburn ringlets. As she ceased singing, he whispered in a voice vibrating with intense feeling:

'"Beloved star!" Thou art so near, and yet—so far! Oh, my dearest. Oh, Erminie, do you know—do you know what my trial is. To be with you every hour of the

day, your betrothed husband, sharing the same home, sitting at the same fireside, mocked with the appearance of the closest intimacy, yet kept at the sternest distance. O, Erminie, I cannot bear it longer, love. The period of my probation must—it must be shortened. Say, love, shall I speak to your father once more? Shall I implore him to fix an early day for our union?'

The colour deepened on Erminie's cheek; and she hesitated a few moments before she replied:

'We are very happy now! we are together almost all the time. What more can we require? My dear father is very much opposed to our marriage taking place before two years. And why should we hurry him? Surely, surely, you do not dream that in these two years I shall change towards you?' she suddenly inquired.

'No, my angel, no. I dream nothing of you but to your honour. I know that you are truth itself. But I cannot wait two years to call you mine, my love. I must—I must have your consent to speak to your father and implore him to shorten the time of our betrothal.'

'I was very happy,' said Erminie, thoughtfully, 'but I cannot be so any longer if you are discontented, for your discontent would be mine. Speak to my dear father, if you will.'

'Thanks, dearest, thanks. I will lose no time,' he said, and he pressed her to his bosom for a moment, and then hurried out of the room to look for Dr. Rosenthal.

He found the Lutheran minister in his study, sitting in his easy-chair, enjoying his pipe, and enveloped in a cloud of aromatic smoke.

'Ah! it is you, Eastworth? Sit down; take out your pipe—I know you carry it about you—and try some of this tobacco; it is prime,' said the doctor, cordially, pushing another easy-chair towards his guest, and setting his box of tobacco near to his hand.

'Thanks,' said Eastworth, availing himself at once of all his old friend's invitations, as the quickest method of conciliating him.

'I think you will find that tobacco about the finest you ever tried. It is not to be bought, my friend, at any price, anywhere. That box was sent me as a Christmas gift by the Captain General of Cuba, whose German minister I was, at the time that his father was Spanish Minister here. Try it, and tell me what you think of it.'

'It is very fine. What an advantage it is, by the way, for any old master to have so many grateful pupils, conveniently located in various parts of the world, from which they can send you the choicest produce of their vineyards. But, dear sir, I did not seek you for the sole pleasure of a smoke in your company. I wished to have a talk with you.'

'Exactly? so did I. I just felt like having a little conversation. I was longing for some one to talk to about old Herodotus. What a magnificent old fellow he was, to be sure!'

'Yes, sir, no doubt, and we will discuss his merits some other time, if you please. To-night I wish to speak on another theme—your daughter,' said Colonel Eastworth, earnestly.

The old minister laid down his pipe and turned to the speaker. The name of his daughter was powerful enough, at any time, to bring him all the way back from the past and fix his attention on the present.

'Yes; well, what of Erminie?' he inquired, anxiously.

Colonel Eastworth reflected for a moment and then plunged headlong into the subject.

'I would submit to you, sir, respectfully but very earnestly, that an engagement of two years will be intolerably tedious to me. I come to entreat you to shorten the period. There is really no reason why we should not be married at once. I love your daughter devotedly, and I am so blessed as to have won her affections. My means are ample, and I shall be only too happy to make any settlements upon my bride that you may please to name. My character and position I hope you know, are unimpeachable.'

'All that is true, Eastworth—quite true!' said the old doctor, taking up his pipe and putting it in his mouth, and puffing away leisurely.

'Then, sir, let me hope that you will reconsider your decision, and allow the marriage to take place,' pleaded the colonel.

'No, Eastworth. I cannot do that, my friend. I really cannot. I regret extremely to deny you anything—you must know that I do. I wish to accommodate you in every possible manner—you must feel sure of that; but I cannot give you my daughter yet a while. I cannot, my dear Eastworth!'

'Perhaps, sir,' suggested the colonel, with rather a crest-fallen air, 'you do not wish to lose your sweet daughter's society just yet. Well, even if you give her to me now, you need not part with her for some time to come. I can here for an indefinite period.'

'It is not that, Eastworth!—no, it is not that. I am not thinking of myself, or of the solitude that may be my fate when she is married. I am thinking only of my dear

child's welfare. She is much too young to be married yet. Think of it!—she is not yet seventeen. Her youth is an objection to her marriage that cannot be set aside, Eastworth, by any agent except time. You must be patient, my friend.'

'But, sir, hear me yet farther. Does not the fact of my own mature age lessen the objection of her extreme youth? What she lacks in experience and knowledge of the world can I not supply?' urged the colonel.

The old doctor smiled.

'Doubtless,' he answered; 'but can you supply her with the physical strength needed to meet the exigencies of married life, and which these next two years will give her, if she remains single? No, Eastworth, you cannot. No earthly power can!'

'Sir, all this is very trying. I adore your daughter.'

'Ah—yes, yes, yes. I know!' said the old doctor, knocking the ashes out of his pipe and refilling it. 'I adored her mother, whom she very much resembles; but I had to wait four or five years for her. It was trying, if I remember right, but I survived it.'

'Can I not persuade you to change your decision in this affair?' pleaded the colonel.

'Well, Eastworth,' said the doctor, once more removing his pipe to answer, 'of all created beings a lover is certainly the most selfish; though that seems a paradox, for love and selfishness should be antitheses. No, nothing on earth would induce me to do my dear child such a wrong as to consent to her marrying under the age of eighteen, which is young enough in all conscience for a girl to take upon herself the responsibilities of matrimony. Anything else on earth to please you I would do except this thing in which the welfare of my dear child is concerned. If you will calmly reflect, Eastworth, you will see the wisdom of my course.'

'Certainly, Dr. Rosenthal,' said the colonel, with a cold but earnest frankness. 'Certainly I have nothing to complain of, but everything to be grateful for, in your course of conduct towards myself. You have given me the freedom of your house, and the society of your daughter, my betrothed. These are inestimable privileges and blessings. And you have my deepest gratitude.'

'Nonsense, my dear fellow; there is nothing to make a fuss about. You are my daughter's affianced; you are my son! you are one of us! and so welcome as Justice himself,' said the doctor.

So the interview terminated.

Colonel Eastworth rejoined Erminie in the drawing-room. She look up inquiringly as he entered.

'Your father is obdurate, my sweet love, I can not win his consent to my wishes upon any terms,' he said, with a profound sigh.

'Then we must be patient. My dear father is very good to us in all other respects; in this also, perhaps, though we do not know it,' replied Erminie, gently.

'It may be so, love,' said Eastworth.

'And you know that if our engagement were to last ten years or twenty, and if in the meantime you should travel to the uttermost ends of the earth, and I should never see or hear from you I should still be true to you—yes, true as truth.'

'I know it, my only love. And I shall soon put your truth to a terrible test.'

'Put it to any test! to any!' exclaimed Erminie, rashly, in her great faith.

CHAPTER XXV III

ANOTHER LOVE CHASE.

I have so fixed my mind upon her,
That wherso'er I frame a scheme of life
For time to come, she is my only joy!
With which I'm used to sweeten future cares;
I fancy pleasures none but one who loves
And doles as I do, can imagine like them.
—*Otway.*

On the morning succeeding the conversation related at the close of the last chapter, Erminie was seated at work in her own room, and singing as she sewed, when the housemaid entered and laid a card before her.

'"Vittorio Cocconi," our Italian Professor. Where is he, Catherine?' inquired Erminie, with her eyes on the bit of enamelled pasteboard that bore the name she read.

'I showed him into the drawing-room, Miss; which he says he would very much like to see you for a few minutes, if so be you can do him the honour,' replied the girl.

'Certainly, Catherine—our ex-master! I will go at once,' said the minister's daughter, rising.

Always dressed with exquisite neatness, Erminie had no occasion to keep her visitor waiting. She followed the maid down the stairs, and passed into the drawing-room.

The young Italian professor was seated, leaning back in one of the easy chairs. He looked haggard and care-worn, but quite as handsome and interesting as ever, with his

long, curling black hair, large, luminous, dark eyes, and slight and elegant form.

Erminie walked straight towards him. She lined the young Italian, who was indeed a great favourite with all ladies. He arose to meet her.

'I am very, very, glad to see you, Signior,' she said, cordially holding out her hands.

He bowed over them as he took them.

'I am too happy, Miss Rosenthal, to see you so well! And your honoured father?'

'He is in his usual good health, thank you! Sit down, Signior,' said Erminie waiving him towards his seat, and taking a chair for herself.

'Thanks!' And the young Italian sank into his place.

'You are spending some time in Washington, I hope?'

'No, I regret to say. I am but a bird of passage.'

'You will at least remain to-day and dine with us? My father, I know, would be so pleased to see you; and so also would Colonel Eastworth, who is with us.'

'Many thanks, Miss Rosenthal; but my evil stars forbid my enjoying so great happiness. The colonel is with you?'

'Yes.'

'I called to-day, Miss Rosenthal, to pay my respects to yourself and your learned father, and also to make some inquiries after——' His voice faltered and broke down, and then, after an inward struggle for composure, he added, huskily—"one who is infinitely dearer to me than my own soul!'

Erminie pitied this lover. How could she help it? She said, gently:

'After Alberta Goldsborough?'

'Yes, my dear Miss Rosenthal. I have heard no word of her since our violent separation in the latter part of September, and this is January. I have used every means to soften the hearts of her parents, but all in vain. I have written them many letters, but they have been returned to me unopened. I have besieged their house in Richmond, but have always been denied admittance, and once I have been threatened with the police. I, a Corsini. But in the pursuit of my dear love, I would suffer any ignominy that would not touch my honour.'

'And you do not know where Alberta is?' inquired Erminie, compassionately.

'No, my dear Miss Rosenthal, I do not. I have been seeking news of her in every place where it seemed possible to hear of her. I went to Sunnyslope to make inquiries of her friend, the little Elfrida; but he told me that she had declined to run away and be married herself, and she should not become accessory to anybody else's running away for such a purpose. Vainly I assured her that I did not contemplate any such rash measure; but only wished to know where my queen love was hidden. She told me to go and ask Alberta's "pap," and if he did not tell me, no one else had any right to do so.'

'And she really would not tell you?'

'No; she laughed at me, and told me to bear it like a man—that the malady under which I suffered was painful but not fatal; that she had taken it herself in the natural way, and had survived it! And so the little Elfrida made a jest of my troubles!'

'And yet she is a good little creature at heart!'

'Very likely! Well, my dear Miss Rosenthal, my next attempt was to look up Miss Conyers, to see if I could get news of my lady through [illegible]. I went to a dismal old country house [illegible] Witch Elms, which I was informed had [illegible] home. But I was driven from [illegible] a grim old woman, whom I supposed to be the presiding witch. However, I was told by a giant with a small head, who seemed to be the porter, that Miss Conyers [illegible] had been driven away by the witch—[illegible], in fact, quite to the antipodes!'

'Yes, your favourite pupil, Britomarte, sailed last October with a party of missionaries for Farther India.'

'Yes, so I learned to my great regret. Well, Miss Rosenthal, I now come to you, to implore you, if you can, to give me news of my beautiful captive queen. Where's she? oh, where is she? That is all I ask to know!' exclaimed the Italian, clasping his hands and stretching them towards Erminie with all the demonstrative enthusiasm of his nature.

'I will tell you all about her. I see no reason in the world why you should not know. Nor did Elfrida, either. In her mischievous spirit she was only plaguing you—that was all. Alberta is a boarder at the Convent of the Visitation.'

'Thanks! a thousand thanks! It is much to know where she is. I can at least walk outside the walls and gaze up to the windows in the hope of seeing my queen love. Perhaps I may be permitted to write to her. Perhaps I may have the divine happiness of being allowed to call on her!' exclaimed the excitable Italian, [illegible] up.

'Oh, now do not hope! I am sorry to discourage you, but I know that she is permitted to correspond only with a few trusted friends, and that all her letters and her correspondence letters pass through the

hands of the Mother Superior, and visit is allowed to her only in the presence of a number of visitors, and then I am not in the presence of the visitors,' said Erminie.

'Ah! how hard, how cruel they that entrap thus young hearts, should withhold pity for her! My poor Alberti! my beautiful love! my overlapped queen! I would risk death to deliver her! I would lay myself beneath her feet! I would devote my life to her service! Say, my dear Miss Rosenthal, are you one of the privileged few who are allowed to write to her?'

'Yes, Signior, but my letters always pass through the hands of the Mother Superior, who opens and reads them before she gives them to Alberta. And in the same manner her answers to my letters are always read by the Mother Superior before they are forwarded to me. Such are her father's orders.'

The young professor heaved a profound sigh and inquired:

'Have you the great happiness of being one of the blessed females who are permitted to visit this angel?'

Erminie could not restrain a smile at the hyperbolical language of this lover as she answered:

'Yes, I am allowed to visit her; but only in the presence of one or two of the sisters.'

'Then, my dear Miss Rosenthal, may I entreat you to be our good genius and convey one little, little message to my love?' said Cerconi, effecting his blandly imploringly.

'I am very sorry to refuse you, Signior; but even if it were right for me to take your message, I should not be allowed to deliver it,' answered Erminie, very gravely.

'Ah! what an unfortunate man I am! Miss Rosenthal, if you cannot take a message, since you would not be permitted to deliver it, can you not take one little, little letter? You could easily deliver a little, little letter unknown to the sentinel sisters,' earnestly the lover, again clasping his hands and bringing his beautiful eyes to bear upon her with all the force of which they were capable.

'I cannot, Signior! I am very sorry to refuse you, but I cannot. It would be a very great breach of faith on my part to do as you wish me. I am trusted by Alberta's parents, and I must be faithful to my trust,' said Erminie, seriously.

'Ah! unhappy man that I am, no one will have compassion on me! And yet, my good Miss Rosenthal, you told me where she is confined.'

'Certainly I did; for I do not believe in secret imprisonments. Nor would I encourage privileged criminals in keeping such a secret.'

'But you will not aid and comfort the prisoner?'

'No—not in the way you wish; she is still a minor in her father's family. I will not aid her in a contraband correspondence,' said Erminie.

'You draw hair-breadth lines of distinction, my too good Miss Rosenthal,' said the Signior, rising in ill-suppressed displeasure to take his leave.

'Have faith and hope, and the patience that springs from both, Signior. In time all will be well,' said Erminie, gently.

'I thank you, my much too good Miss Rosenthal! I will have faith and hope; but I will have no patience! I will not wait for time; but all shall be well because I will make it so! Good morning, my very much too good young lady!'

And Vittorio Cerconi, with a deeply injured look, bowed himself out.

Erminie, smiling at the Italian's half-suppressed vehemence, went up stairs to her needlework.

Cerconi, after leaving the Lutheran minister's house, walked rapidly to a cab stand, threw himself into a carriage and gave the order:

'To the Convent of the Visitation.'

And the carriage started.

He reclined back in his seat, looking grim, moody and sardonic, until at the end of about three quarters of an hour the carriage reached to within a hundred yards of the convent wall. There he stopped it, got out and dismissed it, and continued his way on foot, until he reached the front of the convent. There he walked up and down before the building, gazing up at the windows and debating with himself whether he should boldly go up to the grand entrance and ask to see Miss Goldsborough, with the great probability of being refused and suspected and watched; or whether he should wait to mature a plot in the form of seeing her by stratagem. The first plan suited him well, except in the small chance of success it offered, and the second plan would have suited him, for his Italian spirit delighted in stratagem, but that his impetuous nature detested the process of waiting.

While he was thus debating with himself, he noticed the front door open, and little girls, singly or in twos and threes, and then in larger numbers, issue forth and scurry away in various directions.

And he easily divined that this hour was the mid-day recess of the institution, and that these children were the day pupils.

going to their respective homes in the neighbourhood for dinner, and that in an hour or two they would return for the afternoon session of the school.

And that 'a cond plan' which had been vaguely forming in his mind, immediately took distinct shape and colour, and sprung to maturity.

He hastened to the nearest restaurant and ordered luncheon for himself. And while it was being got ready he asked for writing materials and wrote a letter. Very soon he dispatched his luncheon, and then, with his prepared letter in his hand, he started once more for the convent. On his way thither he stopped at a confectioner's, and bought a quantity of French candy, with which he filled his pockets.

When he got back before the convent walls he found, as he had expected, the day pupils returning to school for the afternoon session. They came in [illegible] had gone out—singly, or in two or three, or in larger numbers.

Vittorio stood under a tree, [illegible] engaged in reading a newspaper, [illegible] in watching the countenances of the [illegible] ing children. Nearly all had gone in, and Vittorio began to despair of the success of his plan. At length all seemed to have gone in, for not another one appeared, and the door was closed, and Vittorio quite despaired of the success of his plan. But—

'Oft expectation fails, and most oft there
Where most it promises; but oft it hits
Where hope is coldest and despair most sits.'

And Vittorio was destined to prove the truth of this, for just as he was turning away with a most heart-broken expression of countenance, he met a beautiful little girl of about nine years of age, dressed in deep mourning, and carrying a satchel of books. He knew that she must be a day pupil of the convent school, and that she was behind time. This little girl, meeting the handsome, melancholy, and most interesting young Italian, looked up in his face with that wistful expression of sympathy which is so often seen in the faces of children when they are contemplating the troubled brows of older people.

Vittorio Corsoni knew in an instant that he had met the sort of little girl for whom he had patiently waited.

He immediately addressed her:

'My dear child, are you a pupil of that convent school?'

'Yes, sir,' answered the tiny woman, gently, while her wistful face seemed to say, 'Poor fellow! what can I do to help you?'

'Do you know a young lady who boards there by the name of—Miss Alberta Goldsborough?' he inquired, in a low voice.

'Oh, yes, sir,' she answered, quickly, while her speaking face expressed the thought, 'Oh, this is the sweetheart she is hidden from!'

For you may be sure, my readers, that these are very few secrets in this world; and the real reason why Miss Goldsborough had been sent to that convent school was whispered about among the other pupils, and this little girl had heard of it; and all her sympathies were with the lovers.

'You love Miss Goldsborough, of course, and would do anything to make her happy, I am sure,' said the Italian in a persuasive voice, fixing his large, lustrous, melancholy eyes with mesmeric effect upon the sensitive child's face.

'No, I do not love her so very much. She is so still and proud,' began the truthful child.

'That is because she is ill-used and unhappy, my dear,' said Vittorio persuasively, keeping his beautiful, sorrowful eyes fixed upon the little girl.

'I am unhappy, too! I have lost my dear mother,' said the child.

'Have you, my darling? Then may the blessed mother of Christ be your mother, and comfort you,' said Vittorio, plaintively.

'But that does not make me sullen. And although Miss Goldsborough will not let me love her much, I do think I would do anything to please her; and I do know I would do anything in the world to please you, so you wouldn't look so very, very miserable!'

'Would you, my little angel? You are a little angel of goodness! Would you take a letter from me to Miss Goldsborough?'

'Oh, yes, sir, that I would.'

'And could you give it to her—secretly?'

'Oh, yes, sir, I know I could.'

'Without any one but herself seeing you do it?'

'Oh, yes, sir.'

'Then, little darling of my eyes and heart, will you take this to her?' said Vittorio, handing his prepared letter to the little girl.

'Yes, indeed, I will, sir! and nobody shall know anything about it but Miss Goldsborough,' answered the child, with her countenance all radiant with the delight of delighting, as she hid the letter in her bosom.

'I shall be here this evening, when the school is dismissed, waiting to see you. Will you bring me the answer to that letter?'

'Oh, yes, indeed, sir, that I will, if she writes it and gives it to me.'

'Thanks, little seraph! And now look here! here are some delicious French bon-bons—whole boxes full of them. Take them, my dear, and share them with your school-mates,' said Vittorio, emptying his pockets of their sweet contents.

The little girl shrank back.

'I didn't do it for them, sir,' she said, with a mortified air.

'I know you didn't, little angel of my life! You did it, or rather you undertook to do it, only to make me happy.'

'Yes, that's it! because I am so sorry for you, you know.'

'Yes, my darling! and you like to make everybody happy, don't you?'

'Oh, yes, indeed.'

'And you are going to make Miss Goldsborough happy?'

'I hope so,' said the little woman, gravely.

'Well, then, you may also make your little school-mates happy, by sharing these bon-bons among them,' said Vittorio, coaxingly.

'Oh, yes! so I may. I didn't think of that. I will take them for that!' the child eagerly exclaimed.

'Here they are, then!' said Vittorio, putting the fancy boxes of bon-bons into the satchel that she opened to receive them.

'But mind! I don't take the letter because of the bon-bons, you know! I promised to take the letter before I knew anything about the bon-bons, didn't I?' the little girl eagerly inquired, repudiating with all her honest soul the very idea of bribery and corruption.

'That you did, my little seraph! You undertook this kind office out of the pity of your heart,' said Vittorio, earnestly.

'And now I must run into school; for I am late enough, anyway,' said the child, kissing her hand and starting off at a quick pace; for she was not only eager to report herself to the teacher in charge of her class, for scholastic duty, but she was vehemently impatient to surprise and delight the cold and proud Alberta by the news and the letter that she had to convey.

She reached the enclosed consecrated grounds just as the bell rung to summon the day pupils from their play-ground to their class-rooms; and so, by a mere moment of time, she saved herself from being marked late, and made to do penance. But she could not hope for an opportunity of delivering her letter until the class-rooms should be over.

CHAPTER XXIX.

SUCCESS IN THE CHASE.

And now lead on!
With me is no delay: with thee to go
Is to stay home: without thee, home to stay
Is to go out unwilling: thou to me
Art all things under Heaven! all places thou.—*Milton.*

Alberta Goldsborough had been a pupil in the convent school for somewhat more than four months. In all that time she had not once heard from her lover. She bore her trial with great stoicism, disdaining to complain, and doing all that was required of her with quiet indifference. She made no friends either among the teachers or the pupils. She was, as the little girl described her to be, proud and still. She felt sure that some time or other Vittorio would, with his Italian craft, succeed in discovering her retreat and effecting her deliverance. And she calmly awaited the time.

Julia MacKnight, the little girl whom Vittorio had entrusted with the letter to his lady love, watched all the afternoon for an opportunity of delivering it to Miss Goldsborough. Chance favoured her. She was sent by her class mistress into one of the small music rooms to practice her lesson on the piano. As she passed on the long hall, flanked on each side by a row of such rooms, she saw the door of one of them open and saw Miss Goldsborough seated at the piano. The child cast a hurried look up and down the hall, and seeing no one near, she slipped in and thrust the letter into Alberta's hands, whispering eagerly:

'He gave it to me outside. You are to answer it, please, and give me the answer to take to him. You had better make haste, please, and write it and give it to me before we have to go down in the class rooms again. I am in the music room number 7.'

'Thanks, my dear—' began Alberta; but the little girl did not wait to hear thanks. She was off like an arrow.

Miss Goldsborough opened her letter and read:

'MY OWN AND ONLY LOVE,—I have but a few minutes to write to you in; if I would seize the earliest opportunity of getting this letter into your hands I must have it ready in a quarter of an hour. After long months of unremitting and unavailing search, I have but just learned the place of your incarceration. Oh, my beloved, my adored, my worshipped queen, you know that I would die to deliver you! Events are on the wing, sweet love, that may separate us—

"'It may be for years, and it may be forever,'—unless we meet and unite our destinies immediately. I have neither time nor opportunity to explain further. Let it suffice for me to say, that I will be on the watch outside the north front of the building every evening from six o'clock p.m. to six a.m. I will have a carriage and horses waiting near, but out of sight. Dear love! if you can effect your escape from the inside of those jealous walls, I will secure your safety on the outside. Or if you will give me a hint as to how I can further aid your deliverance, I will risk my life—nay, more—my eternal salvation to serve you! And always, for time and for eternity, I devote myself body and soul to your service.

'VICTORIA.'

Alberta read this with flushed cheeks and beaming eyes. Before she had finished it, her plan was formed. Ever since she had heard of the convent all the cunning and invention of her mind and body had been on the alert to discover the best means of escape. And she knew them and she might have availed herself of them long before, but for this one consideration—she was ignorant of the whereabouts of her lover; and this the destitute of any other refuge. Out of the convent, where could she have found Victorio, or where could she have gone for shelter? These unanswered questions held her captive as both soul and body could never have done.

But now, if she should make her escape, Victorio would be outside waiting to receive her. And her resolution was taken immediately.

She had no proper writing materials at at hand. But she took an end of a pencil from her pocket and tore the blank page from Victorio's letter and wrote her answer. It was very short:

'Be at your post to-night and wait till you see me.'

She turned his envelope inside out and put her answer into it, and took it into the little cloak-room where the child Julia Mc Knight was practising.

'You will give this to the gentleman as you go home,' she said, handing the letter to the little girl.

'Yes, yes; that I will, Miss Goldsborough. I see all that you wrote the answer to his letter. He will be so delighted to get it,' replied little Julia, hiding the letter in her bosom.

These two should not remain long together. Their intercourse was disagreeable against the rules of the school, where the elder and the younger pupils were not allowed to mingle, except in the presence of their teachers.

Now, as soon as the plan that had brought them together was fully concluded, they separated, the one, Alberta warming with gratitude enough to spare and bless her ardent little friend before leaving her.

Alberta returned to her own room. And when the unsuspecting, young prince found she found the two pupils diligently practising at their respective pianos.

When the hours of study were over for that afternoon, and the day pupils were dismissed, little Julia hurried away to deliver the letter to its destination.

Alberta, in furtherance of her plan of escape, went to the large apartment known as the recreation room, where the boarding pupils always spent their play-time in bad weather. The windows on one side of this apartment overlooked the north road, where she had warned Victorio to be upon his post. When she entered this room she found many of her schoolmates assembled, and the question—

'What shall we play?' eagerly discussed among them.

'I will tell you,' said Alberta.

'What? what?' demanded the girls, pressing around her in much surprise that the still, proud Miss Goldsborough should move in any play.

'Hide and seek. It is a fine, exhilarating play for a cold winter afternoon,' said Alberta.

'Yes, that will be just the thing,' replied one of the girls.

'It is cold, and it is coming on to snow, too,' added another.

'I wonder if all the day pupils will get home before it snows hard,' surmised a third.

'Oh, nonsense! I know won't hurt them if they are caught out in it. I wish the sisters would let us all go out and play in it. But they won't, so let us begin our play here,' urged a fourth.

'You must all accept one to go out into the passage, and stand the door, while that one reconnoitre here and hides. And you must not come back until she cries out "Whoop!" Then you must run in and try to find her, and the one among you who is the first to find her must be the next to hide,' said Alberta.

'Oh, yes—we all know that!' spoke up several of the girls at once.

And the play began. One after another of the girls exercised her ingenuity in discovering a very secret hiding-place, and hid, herself and whooped, and after more or less search, was found by some one of her schoolmates, who became her successor in the

hiding business. To the ever increasing astonishment of her companions, Miss Goldsborough engaged eagerly in the play, but not successfully at first, for she caught no one. At length, however, when the afternoon deepened into night, and the gas was lighted, and the snow was falling very fast, Alberta succeeded in finding the hider. Then it was her turn to hide.

'Now mind,' she said, addressing her companions, 'you must act fairly, and go quite out of sight, and refrain from watching me. I mean to hide where none of you have hidden before. You will have great difficulty in finding me, but I assure you it will be good fun when you do find me. Don't come back until I call "Whoop!"'

'No, no, we won't, Alberta!' exclaimed several of her companions in a breath.

And they all hurried out into the passage.

Alberta stole behind them, and not only closed the door upon them, but silently slipped the bolt. Then she went to the only other door of the room, which was at the opposite end, and she drew the key from the other side, and locked it fast. Having thus secured the room, she went to the north windows. The green linen blinds were drawn down, and the outside shutters were closed. She stopped at a window at the extreme end of the row, and the most out of the range of vision of any one who might, at a later hour, force an entrance into the room, and she lifted the blind, but did not draw it up, and she hoisted the window and opened the shutters. It was dark as pitch outside, and snowing fast; it was a terrible night to take the road in. But what will not a self-willed girl, bent upon her own destruction, venture? She leaned far out of the window and peered into the darkness, but she could see nothing except the falling snow.

Then she ventured to call softly:

'Vittorio! Vittorio!'

There was no response. After a minute she called again, but with no better success. She paused another minute, and then called for a third time:

'Vittorio!'

'I am here, my love—I am here!' answered a hushed, half-subsonant voice, below the window.

'I have called you, three times,' she said.

'I must have been at the other end of my boat. I have been pacing the whole length of this building from end to end of the other, and looking up to these windows—oh, how lastingly!'

'Is all clear below there?'

'Yes, dear love.'

'Then wait there. I will be with you in a moment,' she said, and she withdrew from the window.

Her schoolmates, who had grown impatient at her long delay in hiding, were now clamouring for admittance at the closed door, which, however, they did not know was fastened.

'Why don't you "whoop" and let us in? Haven't you hid yourself yet?' inquired one and another.

'No,' answered Alberta, going up to the door—'not quite yet; I shall in a minute. Don't you be in such a hurry, and don't come in until I whoop.'

'Make haste, then,' exclaimed several of the girls in a breath; 'it is cold out here.'

'I will,' said Alberta. And she went to the peg where her own every-day bonnet and shawl hung, and she took them down and put them on. Next she turned off the gas, leaving the room dark.

Then she went to the window, and pushed it up as high as it would go, got upon the sill, letting the blind drop behind her to hide her means of exit, and took a clear leap down to the sidewalk below. It was a fall of about eight feet, and she came down with a severe shock but with whole bones.

'My own! my own! are you hurt?' exclaimed her lover, in the extremity of anxiety, as he picked her up.

'I—let me recover myself! No, I am not hurt,' answered Alberta, confusedly.

'The carriage is round the corner. Let me lift you and bear you to it.'

'No, I can walk very well now, if you will give me the support of your arm,' answered Miss Goldsborough.

He drew her hand through his arm, and carefully conducted her to the waiting carriage.

How long her school companions remained outside the door of the recreation room, clamouring to come in; or when their patience became exhausted; or how they effected an entrance; or whether they gave the alarm; or who first discovered her flight, Alberta never knew and never cared.

Her lover placed her in a carriage and drove her immediately to the dwelling of a clergyman, where, with the special license Vittorio had taken care to provide, they were married; for in the district of Columbia there is no law to prevent a minor marrying without the consent of parents or guardians at any hour.

From the house of the officiating clergyman they went to a hotel, where they remained until the next morning, when they took the boat to Richmond.

You see Vittorio Obrotai, with all his faults, did not shrink from facing the father-

in-law. In the Italian's creed love was law, and in his inmost soul he was unconscious of having done a great wrong.

But there was no chance of Vitterio's meeting Mr. Goldsborough in Richmond just then. The very boat upon which the newly-married pair embarked, and which had reached the Washington wharf late on the evening before, had brought up Alberta's father on a visit to herself. As it was too late for him to see his daughter that night, and as the hotels were all most uncomfortably crowded, the old gentleman decided to quarter himself upon his good friend, the retired Lutheran minister.

It seemed that Erminie had been hocked for surprises that day, and that the tribe of cousins or friends as numerous as a Scotch clan, of which her father had jestingly spoken, were really beginning to pour in. She had scarcely curtsied Vitterio Corsoni out before a cab rolled up to the door and her two uncles, Hans and Friedrich Rosenthal, got out of it.

Hans had suddenly come from Germany the day before, and they had both come on to see their brother Ernest, the retired Lutheran minister.

Erminie welcomed them with the warmest affection, and showed them into a spare room, where she hastened to have a fire lighted, and to make them comfortable; and then she despatched Catharine to the Congress Library to look for her father and tell him of the arrival of his brothers, so that he might hurry home. The old Lutheran minister came with the messenger, his face beaming with joy, and embraced his brothers warmly in his earnest German manner.

Colonel Eastworth did not appear until the six o'clock dinner, when he was introduced to the strangers. He was, as often now, moody and pre-occupied; but even he could not long resist the influence of that cordial spirit of love which seemed to pervade the Lutheran minister's family.

It was some time after they had had tea in the library, and gone into the drawing-room, and it was while Erminie, her uncles and her lover were at the piano, singing some of the finest selections from the German operas, that the door-bell rang and Mr. Goldsborough was announced.

Old Dr. Rosenthal started up with the agility of youth, to welcome his friend.

Erminie stopped singing and playing, and turned around with a frightened look. Her first impression, that came quick as lightning at the sight of Mr. Goldsborough, was that he had come to Washington in fierce pursuit of Vitterio Corsoni; but the scene to receive her father's guest with all the calmness and courtesy she could command.

Mr. Goldsborough's first words somewhat allayed her fears.

'You look surprised and even shocked to see me here so unexpectedly, at this late hour, my dear young lady; but you will be pleased to learn that I have come to withdraw your friend, my daughter Alberta, from her convent school,' said Mr. Goldsborough, cordially shaking her hand.

'I am very glad to see you at any hour,' replied Erminie, smiling.

'Thanks! The boat was behind time in getting in, or I should not have been so unseasonable in my appearance,' added Mr. Goldsborough.

'You are not unseasonable at all, my old friend. It is not yet eleven o'clock. And we had not begun to think of retiring. For, you see, here are my two brothers, just arrived, and one come all the way from Germany! Let me present them to you—Mr. Hans Rosenthal, Mr. Friedrich Rosenthal—Mr. Goldsborough.'

The Virginia gentleman bowed with old-fashioned ceremoniousness, as the simple-hearted German merchants were introduced. And then he sat down and became one of the party.

'Have you supped?' hospitably inquired the young mistress of the house.

'Yes, my dear, on the boat. Give yourself no trouble,' said Mr. Goldsborough, with a bow.

'I am very glad that you are going to take my favourite, Alberta, out of the convent,' said the doctor.

'Yes! my doing so before the half-yearly term has expired may seem very capricious; but, in fact, it is not so. There are grave reasons why all we Virginians should gather all the scattered members of our families under our own state roofs. The progress of public affairs makes it imperative that I should take my daughter home, or risk the being separated from her for a long and indefinite period. I believe that I am speaking among friends and sympathizers here—the presence of Colonel Eastworth in this house, indeed, assures me that I am. And I know, also, that my esteemed host, although not a native of the country, has been a citizen of the South for many years. I may therefore say that Virginia will certainly secede from the United States, and that she is now arming herself in defence of her right to do so.'

No one answered for a while. But the speaker caught the eye of Colonel Eastworth, who was looking at him with a steady and

evening gone, that was intended to convey the impression that the subject must not be pursued, and must never be resumed in that house.

At length, after a thoughtful pause, Dr. Rosenthal spoke; but he spoke rather wide of the mark; for, though nothing could have been plainer than the words used by Mr. Goldsborough, and although Dr. Rosenthal understood the meaning of those words, yet he strangely misunderstood the position assumed by the speaker. He honestly supposed that the Virginian gentleman, in speaking of secession, spoke of it only as deprecating its evils. This was very apparent in his answer:

'You say that Virginia will certainly secede from the United States, and that she is even now arming herself in defence of her right to do so! Nonsense, Goldsborough! Don't you alarm yourself! There is, certainly, an epidemical madness in the air, and a few leading statesmen have caught it. South Carolina has gone, it is true. She took the malady in its most malignant form. Let us hope that she will soon get well and come back. But Virginia secede! The gallant Old Dominion go! Never, Goldsborough! Don't distrust your native state, my friend! She is as loyal to the Union as you are, or as I am! And, heaven knows, I love this country, which has fostered me for forty years—I love her as truly and as deeply as if I had been born her son! And should this madness of secession become general, and should she have a civil war forced upon her, I, with my three score years, will take up arms in her defence as promptly as you, Goldsborough, or as Eastworth, or any other loyal and gallant son of her soil would do!'

What a speech was this for the brave and true-hearted old man to make to a couple of conscientious but unsuspected secessionists, who were his honoured guests.

Neither of them answered a word; they found that they had mistaken their man; for this was really the first definition of his position that the Lutheran minister had ever thought it worth while to make; and Eastworth had supposed him to be indifferent on the subject; and Goldsborough, seeing one of the strongest spirits of secession an inmate of his house, had really believed him to be one of that party. They were silent from surprise.

But Erminie was a picture! She turned upon her father, beaming with love, admiration, and entertainment, as she exclaimed—

'Right, my dear father! I love to hear you speak so. And I myself would strap the sword to your side and place the musket in your hand, and follow you to the field, if you would let me, to dress your wounds if you should be hurt, and nurse you if you be sick; and to risk my life with yours and die with you, if need should be!'

'There, there, my darling, I know you are a brave and good girl! and there are millions of your countrywomen like you! for you are a native American citizen, my Minie, although I am not,' said the Lutheran minister, patting his daughter on the head. 'But there will be no necessity, let us hope, for all this self-devotion. The clouds of secession gather rather thickly and darkly just now, but they will be dispelled—they will be dispelled,' he added, walking away to the fire-place.

Colonel Eastworth took the vacant place beside Erminie, and stooped and whispered very low—

'And what will become of me, my Minie, when you shall follow your father to the field? Where shall I be, and who will care for me?'

'You will be with my father, and I will care for you both. Surely you will stand shoulder to shoulder with my father, in defence of our beloved country! And so surely I shall be near to minister to you both!' answered Erminie, looking up with surprise.

As the hour was late, the party now separated and retired to their respective rooms.

The last thought of Colonel Eastworth, in sinking to sleep, was:

'It will come to this—that my beloved Minie must choose between her loyalty and her lover—and her lover will be quite sure to triumph!'

CHAPTER XXX.

SERPENTA'S ARRIVAL.

How does not a meeting like this make amend
For all the long months I've been staying away?
To see thus before me my schoolmate and friend,
As smiling and kind as a sunshiny day.
—Anon.

As soon as the early family breakfast was over, Mr. Goldsborough got ready to go to the reservoir to fetch away his daughter.

'You will bring her immediately here, I hope?' said Erminie.

'Oh, of course—of course he will,' added Erminie's father.

'Thank you both. I certainly intend to

call with Alberta before leaving town,' replied Mr. Goldsborough.

'Call with her! Bring her here and make a visit with her. You surely cannot mean to take her away from the doctor to the country without trying for a night of the city?' exclaimed the old doctor.

'We must have Washington this evening at the latest. The necessity for our return is imperative,' answered Mr. Goldsborough gravely.

'I suppose you are anxious to get back, to stand with all your strength this tendency to secession, or should you not succeed in that, at least to take care of your family for awhile, threatened by state politics. Well, perhaps you are right,' said the conservative old minister.

Mr. Goldsborough's face flushed purple, but that might have been from the efforts he was making to draw on a very tight glove, or even from the complexion of the scarlet cravat, which kept that wee wound around his throat at 'Mr. Street' there blood and great-coated, and ready for his start. He answered not a word, but took his hat from the table, bowed and went away.

The night fall had been falling all night long, by deep upon the ground, and was falling fast still.

The old doctor shut the door quickly after his departing guest, and came back into the library with a renewed appreciation of the comforts of his own domicile.

Erminie ran upstairs to get ready her best spare room for the reception of Alberta; for though Mr. Goldsborough had said that he must leave Washington with his daughter to-night, the hospitable entertainment of high-bred courtesy Erminie contemplated hoped that he would change his mind, and pass the day and night with them.

While she was busy having the fire lighted, the bed linen changed, and the water brought up, thinking all the time how comfortable and happy she would try to make Mr. Street and Alberta, whether her stay should be short or long, she received a hasty summons from her brother.

She ran down stairs to the lower hall where, to her unbounded astonishment, she saw Farmer Fielding and his daughter Bessie. They had just been admitted by the servant, and were shaking hands with Dr. Hazelhurst, who had come out of the library to meet them.

'Erminie, oh, so glad to see you, my darling,' exclaimed Bessie, running and catching her little friend in her broad and motherly arms. 'I never knew before the even strength of the elder friend. While she was [illegible] she turned to-wards him with a blush and a smile, saying:

'I thank you, Mr. Fielding, I am very happy to see you. How do you do?'

'Thank you, Miss Minie, I do as well as any man can in my circumstances. I have been—hem—the farmer, but he was cut short by the doctor, who finished the sentence for him in his, the doctor's, own way.

'Exposed to a snow storm, and I am wet and cold?' that's what he would say, my Minie. Come right up into my room, Farmer, and change your clothes at once.'

'Thank ye kindly, sir. I'm not wet. We came in a covered waggon as far as the Drover's Rest, close by here, and only walked the little bit from there. Bless you, we do look powdered over pretty well, but it's all on the outside. It don't penetrate like some things do, Doctor. No, Miss Minie; the circumstance to which I allude was the being turned out of my home by a lot of lunatics, who are now trying to turn the government upside down!' said the farmer, beginning to unbutton his overcoat as he stood.

Erminie and her father stared in silence for a moment, and then exclaimed in surprise, and at the same instant:

'Driven out of your home, Mr. Fielding.'

'Yes, driven out of our home—nothing less. Ask my girl here.'

'Yes—that was it,' broke in Bessie. 'Old Vivremy was made too hot for him personally to be—hem—in short, our house was burned over our heads, and we should have been burned in it if we hadn't made good our escape.'

'Fell short my beyond measure!' exclaimed the minister in consternation.

'Oh my dear Bessie, what a misfortune. How did that happen? But don't say to tell us here, my darling. Come up to my room and change your clothes first,' said Erminie, in deep sympathy.

'Oh no! I can just take off my hood and shawl and overshoes here, if you please, and let your maid carry them away. I am dying to tell you all about it. Let us go into that pleasant-looking room, there. I dare say it is your usual sitting-room,' said Bessie, untying her hood-strings, she spoke; while she impatiently tore off her hood and shawl, and kicked off her overshoes.

'Both the library and the drawing-room with us all,' replied Erminie, pushing the door open and leading the way.

They were there quite alone. Colonel Hollingworth had left the house some time after Mr. Goldsborough went, and the doctor's two brothers, [illegible] the doctor's daughter, having departed [illegible]

Erminie placed chairs round the fire, and the party of four drew up to it.

Erminie and her friend sat on one side of the chimney, and the two gentlemen on the other.

'First of all, though, have you had breakfast?' inquired Dr. Rosenthal, while Erminie placed her hand upon the bell, ready to ring and give orders.

'Oh, yes, thank ye; we had a very good breakfast at the Drover's,' replied the farmer.

'Then tell us all about the affair,' urged the doctor, earnest in his sympathy and eager in his curiosity.

'Ask my girl here; she'll tell ye. She knows a deal more about it than I do,' said the farmer.

'Tell us all about, Effie darling,' said Erminie, affectionately.

'Oh, don't be afraid but what I'll tell you all about it. I've been dying to do so ever since it happened. First, you must know it was all my doings.'

'The burning of your father's house, my dear!' exclaimed Erminie, in horror.

'No, but the provocation of those who did burn it. The first public act of my life resulted in getting our house burned over our heads. Encouraging, wasn't it? It was all my fault.'

'It was all her glory, she should say, Miss Minie?' put in the farmer.

'That's a mere matter of opinion, pap. The glory or the shame of my act is an open question that will be settled in quite opposite manners by opposing parties. The secessionist will call it an act of treason. The unionist will say it is an act of patriotism. The first will call me a "wretch;" the second will say I am a heroine. All I say about the matter is, that it was all my doings, because I am a self-willed little party, who don't like contradiction.'

'I see I must tell the story myself,' put in the farmer. 'Well, I suppose you know there is a pretty strong secesh feeling down there in Virginny?'

'I have heard so, I am very sorry to say,' replied the doctor.

'Bless you, yes, and down our way—— Whew! Why, as far back as last Christmas, when our Virginia boys, who were at college in Washington, came home for the holidays, they made their boast that when they went back to Washington it would be behind the "red-cross" banner (whatever in the deuce's name that might be), to the sound of drum and bugle, and with swords and muskets to take the city. Rash! I let the lads talk. I didn't even think it even worth while to contradict them. I only thought they were a little more inflated with gin than even college boys usually are; and I considered their blowing it off a necessary process.'

'I heard the talk of secessionists very much in the same spirit. I could not believe it real,' said the doctor.

'Yes; but the jest has become very serious now. The madness has spread, and is spreading. Our neighbourhood is a regular hot-bed of secession. A few weeks ago I had occasion to go to Winchester with my two brothers. It was a law-suit that took us there. In fact, we were subpœnaed as witnesses in the great case of Trowbridge versus Kay, and we had to go, and the case detained us there more than a fortnight. I will just observe here that on our road to Winchester we noticed at every public house, post-office, blacksmith and country store, and at over so many private houses, banners raised, and bearing such mottoes as these—"Secession!" "The Southern Confederacy;" "No Compromise;" "State's Rights," and so forth. I didn't see one star-spangled banner in the whole route! Well, meantime, you know, I left my little Effie at home, with no one to protect her but the negroes. Bless you, I thought she was as safe as safe could be! Now you tell what happened after I went away, Effie, for you know more about it than I do,' said the farmer, turning to his little daughter.

'I knew he'd break down in the story. He'd better let me tell it from the first. Well, when pap and my two uncles had gone and left me alone with the old blind mare, the cow, the pigs and the darkies, I got into mischief the first thing!'

'Of course you did,' said Dr. Rosenthal, laughing. "When the cat's away, the mice will play!" But what particular species of mischief did you get into?'

'Ah!' "there hangs a tale," and not a mouse's tale neither. Well, seeing so many strange new flags flying round, I thought I would just hoist the old one for fear people might forget its existence. The only difficulty in my way was that I hadn't an old one to hoist.'

'But mark you what she did!' exclaimed her father, proudly.

'I made a raid upon our drawing-room and best bed-chamber. There were red moreen curtains hanging up in one and white cotton in the other; so I took down the curtains red and white, and tore them into strips and sewed them together like the stripes of the dear old flag! Then I took my blue merino dress and cut out the square for the stars. Then I cut the stars and

sewed them upon it. It was twenty-four feet long by eight broad. It had forty-eight stripes and a hundred stars, and it took me a whole fortnight to make it! When it was done, I had a misgiving that it was over regulation size, and that there were more stripes than was lawful, and more stars than states; but I wasn't sure, for I had forgotten all about my geography and history; and, besides, I thought if I had made a mistake it was certainly on the right side, and at worst, it was only a prophecy of the future, for the dear old flag is bound to grow and increase; and if she isn't entitled to a hundred stars now she will be when we have annexed South America and the rest of creation! So I resolved to let my flag fly as I had made it.'

'But where could you expect to find a staff strong enough to bear it?' inquired Dr. Rosenthal.

'This was my second difficulty. And I was at my wits' ends for a little while. However, there was a tall Lombardy poplar tree growing before our house. So I made Ned, our man of all work, take an ax and go up that tree and shred off all its branches, until it stood up a bare pole—tall, straight and strong, as the mainmast of a three decker. The stumps of the limbs that were looped off made very good holds for the feet and hands in climbing. I made Ned take the flag up to the top of that pole and nail it there, so that it might never be drawn down!'

Here Elfie's father nodded approvingly towards his host, as if claiming admiration for his daughter, while little Elfie went on.

'It was after sunset on Saturday night when we finished our work. So on Sunday morning the rising sun greeted our flag. Oh, I tell you it was a glorious sight. And none the less so for being larger than life. I mean above the regulation size. There was a light wind from the west, and the flag floated finely out towards the east as if to meet the sun! Oh, I did so rejoice in it that I could scarcely resolve to go in and eat my breakfast! At last, however, I did, and I despatched it quickly, so that I might go and sit in the door and watch my flag.'

'Until it was time to go to church?' inquired Dr. Rosenthal.

'I couldn't go to church that day. The church was six miles off. It was warm, thawing weather, and the roads were impassable by foot-passengers, unless they were rare in Wellington boots. And pap had the horses with him. So I couldn't go to church; but as it was a pleasant winter day I sat in the open door and watched my flag. Lord! lord! what a commotion it soon began to create! First a fellow riding along the road in front of our house, stopped his horse and shook his whip at it. Not to be behindhand in courtesy, I made a mouth at him; but I'm afraid he didn't see me.'

'You must know,' explained the farmer, 'that the road of which she spake is in front of our house, is not close in front of it, but about three or four hundred yards off, so that, though she might see the horseman stop and shake his whip, the horseman would not be likely to see her make a grimace.'

'Then,' continued Elfie, 'others passed, and all saluted my glorious flag with howls and execrations. Yes! these people stopped on their way to church to hoot at my flag! All that proved to me how right I was to raise it. Ned, my faithful Ned, who was standing by me, said:

'"Miss Allfriday, I'm feared as will have a fight for that flag!"

'"I don't care, Ned," said I, "I had as liefhave a fight as not! anything for a change!" Lord bless you, Erminie! I was only joking. I had no more idea that we should have a fight for our flag than I had that we should have a revolution! But next day it came sure enough.'

'It came! the fight!' echoed Erminie, in dismay.

'Yes, my dear. But don't look so scared! I survived it!'

'But how did it happen?'

'Well, you see they did let Sunday go by without making any very violent demonstrations against the flag. They confined themselves to hooting and howling. But bright and early Monday morning three ruffians came to the house and rapped. I hadn't left my room, so I looked out of the window and saw who they were and guessed what they came for, and I called down to Ned, who slept in the hall, not on any account to open the door. And then I went and hoisted the window and asked what they wanted.

'"We want that blamed flag down!" roared one.

'"Then want will be your master," said I.

'"It has no business here! It shall come down!" howled another.

'"Serve you right!" said I.

'"Send out your beastly black man to haul it down!" growled the third.

'"Do you good," I observed.

'They didn't seem to see the point of my answers, for the first one that had spoken burst out into a terrific volley

of imprecations, that was enough to raise the hair up off my head, only it didn't! And then he ordered me to have the flag lowered.

'"You're another!" I said.

'Then all three began to curse and swear in a horrible manner. And I began to sing as loud as I could:

'"Three blind mice! they all ran after the farmer's wife!"

'Then still cursing and swearing like a crew of pirates in a sea-fight, they went to the flagpole and began to climb it. Seeing which, I went and got father's gun, examined it and found it all right. It was a double-barrelled gun; and I carried it to the window and rested it on the sill and pointed its [illegible] towards the top of the pole. The thr[illegible] had reached it then and were [illegible] at the flag to get it loose.

'"Come down!" I shouted, "or as sure as I love I will fire!"

'They answered me with curses. Now, I am no sharp-shooter, so what followed was all owing to chance. Using the window-sill as a rest, I trained the gun as well as I could, pointed it towards them and pulled the trigger. And simultaneously with the flash and the report one of the men uttered a fierce yell, and fell to the ground. Oh, Heaven, Minie, what a tremendous revulsion of feeling I experienced when I thought that I had killed a man! I do not know whether I could have fired again. However, the two others did not wait for the discharge of the second barrel. They slid down that pole like monkeys, and ran off like quarter horses, leaving their wounded upon the field. Then I laughed. I could not help it. I sung out:

"See how they run! see how they run!"

'And then, in my excitement I blazed away at them with the other barrel. But they were so far off that only one of them got struck, and in the back, and with a spent ball, for I saw him stop suddenly with a great howl, clap his hands behind him, bend backwards, and then run faster than before.'

'I call that a brilliant victory,' said Farmer Fielding, nodding towards his friends.

But the Lutheran minister and his daughter were too gravely interested in Elfie's narrative to express any admiration of her feat.

'I am not proud of the victory,' said Elfie, candidly. 'I was delighted with it—but not proud of it. How could I be?—For it is true, I was one girl against three men, yet I had the advantage of fighting behind my entrenchments, while they were exposed. I had also fire-arms, which they had not. No, I don't think I have any reason to vaunt myself for this easy victory.'

'But the man you shot from the pole! Oh, my dear Elfie, I hope—I hope he was not killed!' said Erminie, clasping her hands in the earnestness of her anxiety.

'No, he wasn't killed. But, see here—"I hope—I hope" you are not a sympathizer with the man by your interest in his fate!' mocked Elfie.

'You know that I am not. I was thinking—not of the man's fate; he was nothing to me, and probably deserved all he got; I was thinking only of you. I was so much afraid you had killed him, and would have the dreadful memory of that deed to bear through life!'

'And suppose I had? It would have been very shocking to a new recruit like me, just at the first go off; but, bless you! it would not have weighed on my conscience very heavily. It should have soon got over it, and been all the readier to pick off the next fellow that should insult the glorious old flag!' said Elfie, with a defiant toss of her head.

'Oh! Elfie, I am so sorry to hear you say so,' sighed the Lutheran minister's daughter.

'Gammon! If you were to wake up in the dead of night and find a burglar in your room, and you had a revolver conveniently at hand, wouldn't you shoot him at once, pray?'

'Oh, no, no, Elfie. I couldn't take life—I couldn't, Elfie.'

'Not even to save your own?'

'No, not even to save my own.'

'Why, what a little coward you are, to be sure!' sneered Miss Elfie.

'No, I don't think I am a coward either. I should not be afraid of exposing my own life—no, nor of laying it down in the service of any one I love; but I could not take life, Elfie. And oh, I am so glad you did not do so—that the man you shot was not killed,' said Erminie, earnestly.

'Yes, the man you shot, Miss Elfie! Let's get back to him, and learn what became of him,' said the doctor.

'As soon as the other two men had run away, I set the old gun up in its place, and ran down stairs to the hall, where I found my faithful Ned guarding the door with an old blunderbuss.

'"Miss Allfrida!" he said. "I told you we'd have a fight for the old flag, and we've had it; and it won't be the last, neither. There're gone now, but they'll come back to-night in stronger numbers."

'"I don't care, Ned," I said; "come

one, come all, this house shall fly from off its firm ground as soon as I!"

'And then I told him to open the door, for I wanted to go out and look after our wounded prisoner. Lor', Minie, when I went up to him I thought he was dead, sure enough! He was lying on his stomach, with his head, arm and leg doubled under him. Ned was frightened, too.

'"Goodness gracious me alive, Miss Elfie! he's done for; and the constables will do for us!"

'"Turn him over, Ned," I said.

'Ned turned him over, showing a ghastly face turned up towards the sky. I ran in the house, and brought out a pitcher of water and a bottle of whiskey. And we dashed the water in his face; but with very little effect. Then Ned opened his clenched teeth with an oyster-knife, and I uncorked the bottle, and poured the whiskey down his throat. Bless you! he swallowed it like mother's milk. Did you ever see a baby suck in its sleep? Well, that's the way that fellow sucked in his unconsciousness. When the bottle was empty, and I drew it from his mouth, he opened his eyes and began to stare around.

'"You'll do!" I said.

'And then I told Ned to call one of the field negroes to help him, and to bring the wounded man in, and lay him on pap's bed, and then go for the doctor. When the man was moved, oh! he shrieked out, I tell you. And when the doctor came and examined his injuries, he found that my shot—had passed through his shoulder, and the fall from the flag-pole had broken his leg. So you see his injuries though serious were not fatal. Later in the day his friends came in a large waggon, with a feather bed and blanket in the bottom of it, and took him away. They "cussed sum," and threatened loudly to have me arrested and sent to prison for life. I assured them that I was justified in what I did, and that the law would sustain me, and they knew it. Finally they went off, vowing vengeance against all our tribe.'

'Were you not terrified by their threats?' inquired Dr. Rosenthal.

'Not then. I was too mad. But after I had coloured down and saw that it was growing late, and night was coming on, I began to feel uneasy; because, you see, there was no one to guard the house but myself and old Ned and old Cassy. So, very early in the evening, I fastened up the house, bolting and barring every door and window. And I loaded three double-barrelled guns, and made other preparations to meet the assault. And I went up into the attic to watch the approaches to the house. And I tell you what, I was glad when I saw pap's waggon coming down the road.

'Yes,' put in Farmer Fielding. 'The case of Trowbridge versus Kay closed that very morning, and my two brothers and myself were at liberty to come home. My two brothers, however, decided to stay over that evening, to attend a Union meeting, got up to make some little stand against the progress of the secessionists. But I was anxious about my girl, and so I resolved to come home, and in good time, too, for I found her fortifying the house to withstand an assault. I was so astonished that my breath was suspended. But she soon told me what had happened; and I soon had reason to see the prudence of her preparations, and also their inefficiency.'

'I hope you took command of the fortress,' said Dr. Rosenthal.

'Of course I did; but my brave girl had already done everything that could be done in the way of preparing for defence. Though as I said before, these preparations proved inefficient at the crisis.'

'Could you not have called upon the constabulary force of your county to protect your house against a threatened assault?' inquired Dr. Rosenthal.

'Oh, yes! I could have called on them fast enough; but, like Glendower's spirits, they probably would not have come when I did call—they were all secessionists to a man. And we are drifting into anarchy.'

'What a dreadful state of things.'

'You would think so if you had been at our house that night.'

'What night was that, by the way?'

'Why last Monday night, of course.'

'Oh, certainly—yes! I recollect Miss Elfie's naming the day.'

'It is a day to be remembered in the annals of my domestic life. Myself and my girl sat up and watched. But for all that I did not really believe that our own old neighbours would pull the house down over our heads, merely because we were loyal to the old Union and the old flag. But what will not maniacs do? Myself and my brave girl watched until near daybreak, when, thinking that all was right for the time being, and that we would not have an attack that night, we separated and went to bed, to get an hour or two of repose before breakfast. I had been some time asleep when I was rudely awakened by a terrific yell. Such a yell as a band of painted savages, armed with fire-brands and tomahawks, might rear forth in surprising a peaceful home.

'I sprang up and rushed to the window

and threw up the sash and looked out. The eastern horizon was quite red, and by its light I saw a crowd of men armed with guns, pistols, swords, pitchforks, and a variety of weapons, gathered around the house. As I beat out to look down I saw a quantity of straw, shavings and dry brushwood piled around the posts that supported the porch. The moment they saw me they saluted me with a perfect howl of rage.

'"Come out of that, you——" here followed a volley of profane and indecent imprecations and vituperations—"come out of that house with your devil's imp of a daughter, unless you wish to be burned alive inside of it.'

'Before I could reply, my brave girl, who had heard the row, was by my side. She put a gun into my hand and said:

'"Pap, I have dolled up Ned, and he can do good service. Now you take this gun, and fire into them from this window, and I will fire from the other. And we'll keep it up as long as the ammunition lasts. And then we'll die game, pap.'

'I turned to answer my girl, to tell her not to show herself at the other window—to be careful; but she was gone—she was already before the other window, and training the gun so that it muzzle should be in a line with the crowd below. I did the same at my window. We fired at the same moment. And our fire was answered by a roar of rage and a discharge of musketry. The shots rattled against the front of the house, and shivered the windows, shutters and sashes. I trembled for my girl.

'"Effie, for Heaven's sake, leave the window, fall flat upon the floor," I said.

'"Not if I know it, pap," she answered, not while I have got a shot left to send at the enemy." And so saying, she blazed away with her other barrel.

'I did the same with my other. And again we were answered by a volley of musketry. And again the shot rattled against the walls, and split the timber of the window frames. I saw my brave girl fall, and in an agony of terror I threw down my gun, and ran and lifted her up.

'"I'm all right, pap," she said. "It was only my gun kicked and knocked me down. And now if you don't load up and let 'em have it again, you are no pap of mine. I'll disinherit you."

'But, notwithstanding her words, I bore her into a back room, where she would be safe from the shots. And even as I carried her away, I saw the smoke and flames rising from the outside of the house, and heard the rioters roar forth with many fierce curses—

'"Come out of that or be burned alive in it."

'I laid my girl on the bed, in the back room, and hastened to my own room, where I secured my little money and valuable papers. While I was hastily thrusting them about my person, old Ned came to the door and whispered:

'"Massa, massa, for de Lord's sake, come away. Take Miss Effie by main force, if she won't give in any other way, and come. I'm got the waggon and horses at the back door."

'"Ned," said I, "come with me to Miss Effie's room, and tell her the state of affairs."

'And we went to my girl's room, and I got her clothes, and ordered her to dress herself quickly, and threatened if she did not do so to take her just as she was.

'"Oh, if I am to contend with foes outside and cowards inside, of course I shall have to evacuate. And I will do it decently," said my girl. And she got ready very quickly, and went down the back stairs to the back door, where Ned had the waggon ready. And I put my girl into it, and got in beside her; and Ned mounted the driver's seat, and we got off by the back road and made our escape. And here we are. But if it had not been for the thought of my dear, brave girl, I should have stayed there and defied the mob to the utmost.'

'If it hadn't been for the thought of me! Well, now, I like that. That's cool!' exclaimed Effie; 'especially when by your own showing, pap, if it had not been for you and Ned and the kicking gun, I should have stood my ground and died game, or driven off the assailants on the last occasion as I had done on the first. I'm sure I did very well on that occasion, when I hadn't you to help me, pap. But on the last—! Well, what could I do with fury-hearted foes outside raging to get in, and faint-hearted friends inside crying to get out, and my very weapon recoiling upon me and kicking me down. I tell you all what! I fought against fearful odds on every hand. Joan of Arc herself would have given in under such circumstances. Not that I would, if it hadn't been for that cowardly pap of mine.'

'I don't think either you or your pap have reason to be ashamed of your conduct on that occasion. "What could you against the shock of hell?" said Dr. Reverend.

'"Well, anyhow, I know what I'll do next time, if ever I find myself in command of a domestic castle in siege, I'll put pap up in his bed-room till the fight's over.

You hear that good, don't you, pap?' said the's daughter.

'But, Effie, my darling, where have you left that good old negro who rescued you from the burning house?' inquired Erminie.

'Oh, he is all right. He is at the Drover's.'

'You know, Effie, he would be quite welcome in our kitchen. Our servants would take care of him.'

'"Thanky, honey," as Ned would say; he is very well where he is. Besides, pap and I haven't come to quarter ourselves upon you so suddenly. We only wanted to see the smiling faces of friends after having seen the frowning faces of so many foes. That is all. Presently we intend to go out and look for a boarding-house where we can stop for the present.'

'Indeed, you will do no such thing, Miss Effie. In the first place, there are no boarding-houses but what are already crowded. In the second place, here is my house, open to receive any of my friends at any time, and especially wide open to welcome any number of friends for any length of time who have suffered from their devotion to this Union which has fostered me for nearly fifty years! No, friend Fielding, you will please make yourself at home where you are,' said Dr. Rosenthal, with earnest sincerity in every word, tone and look.

Farmer Fielding put out his sturdy hand and thanks the fat fist of the good doctor, as he replied—

'Thank ye, mister, for the present. I accept your kind invitation, the more especially as I shall be backwards and forwards from here to Virginia, and she'n't like to leave my little girl alone in a boarding-house. Thank ye kindly, minister. We'll stop with you a bit, until we can turn ourselves round.'

'That's settled, then! And now, I am happy to tell you that to-day you will meet an old friend of yours here, said Dr. Rosenthal, cordially.

'An old friend of mine? Example! I should like to see one besides yourself. Mostly all my old friends have become secessionists, and are no friends of mine.'

'Any how, one here's. He is loyal to the Union, and is very much disturbed in his mind at evidences of that spread of the secession spirit through his native State. I [illegible] Britemarle Carteret the representative secessionist in the State Legislature—one of the most influential [illegible] secession [illegible] leaders among them?' exclaimed farmer Fielding.

'Who, Goldsborough?'

'Himself.'

'Are you not mistaken?'

'Not a bit of it! He has been stumping the State, making secession speeches in every congressional district. I heard him make one in our neighbourhood, at the Bull's Head tavern. Who do you think replied to it?'

'I don't know. I am sure. I am so astonished to hear that Goldsborough is a secessionist that I am filled with perplexity.'

'Why, Victoria Carteret answered him. You know that there is no love lost between Goldsborough and Carteret; and Goldsborough being a secessionist might have been cause enough to make Carteret a unionist; though I have observed that naturalized foreigners who have been protected by our government have been among the most zealous in its defence, and if this matter ever comes to blows, they will strike good ones.'

'Yes,' said the old minister; 'take me for an example. I am a foreigner by birth, and over sixty years of age; yet should this country have a civil war forced upon her, I will take up arms in her defence as promptly as any young man of her own, to help me heaven!'

While the doctor and the farmer were talking politics together, Erminie and Effie chatted aside. Erminie told Effie of the visit of Victoria Carteret.

'He came to our house, too,' replied Effie; 'but he was in such a desperate mood that I wouldn't give him any satisfaction. I was half doubtful what he might do, and half amused at her extravagancies. So I laughed at him. But I tell you what, Erminie, between you and me and the gate-post, Alberto Goldsborough is a fool—in the first place, for loving such a mad fellow as that Italian monkey. Why, he's all eyes and hair, and fire and blood. I should as soon think of falling in love with a bombshell! And in the second place, she is still a bigger fool for not keeping her own money pap better than she does! The idea of her letting her pap look her up in a convent! I would just like to see my pap try that on! Wouldn't I make an example of him? I'd [illegible] what, Erminie, papa and mamma and brothers, all men of all sorts, slave tyrants if you can't keep them in their places! They [illegible] hear the [illegible] Union. "Give them an inch and they'll take an ell." Britemarle was part in the right of

it. By the way, do you ever hear from her?'

Erminie got her brother's letter and put it into the hands of Elfie.

And just then the door-bell rang violently, and when the servant ran in haste to see the cause of the noisy summons, Mr. Goldsborough burst into the house, and then into the library. His face was inflamed, his features distorted, and his eyes flashing with passion.

'For heaven's sake, Goldsborough, what has happened?' exclaimed Dr. Rosenthal, rising in alarm.

'What? She has gone! Fled from the convent!' roared the enraged man, throwing his hat upon one chair, and his gloves upon another, and without noticing any one in the room except his host—'yes, brought dishonour upon all her family! And may the curses of—'

'Hush!' said the minister, laying his hand gently upon the lips of the speaker; 'no curses, Goldsborough. Sit down quietly and compose yourself, and tell us all about it. See, here is Mr. Fielding and his daughter, your old friends.'

'How do you do, Fielding? How are you, Miss Elfie? I beg your pardon for not seeing you. But you will not wonder at a man being blind with rage when his only daughter has disgraced herself and her family,' said Mr. Goldsborough, gruffly enough, as he coldly shook hands with Elfie and her pap.

'Oh, no, Mr. Goldsborough, not so bad as that. Young people will sometimes choose for themselves, you know. And though their choice may be indiscreet, and even unfortunate, it need not be disgraceful. Try to calm yourself, and make the best of it. The young man is something of a monkey, to be sure; but I believe him to be a well-meaning monkey,' urged the farmer.

And all party politics seemed for a moment forgotten in the interest felt in this domestic calamity.

'Sit down, Mr. Goldsborough! Do sit down and compose yourself! And let us hear the details of this flight,' entreated the doctor.

'No, I cannot sit down. And I will not compose myself! I will pursue the abductor of my daughter, and shoot him wherever I find him.'

'But, how do you know who was the abductor, if it comes to that?' inquired the farmer.

'Oh, I know well enough. A fellow, answering to the description of this Corsoni, was seen lurking around the convent all day yesterday. Besides, you know, she would have run off with no one else. Good bye, Fielding!' 'Good bye, Rosenthal! Young ladies, your servant!' said Mr. Goldsborough, seizing up his hat and gloves, and leaving the house before the startled company had recovered from their astonishment.

CHAPTER XXXI.

ANOTHER TRIAL FOR ELFIE.

I kiss not where I wish to kill;
I feign not love where most I hate;
I break no law to win my will;
I care not for a traitor's fate.—*Yours.*

All unknown and unsuspected by the good Lutheran minister, his house became the headquarters of consultation, and he became involved in a net-work of circumstantial evidence that at a later period might have brought him before a military commission or placed him on the scaffold.

He had discovered that Mr. Goldsborough was a secessionist; and for that reason he was very glad to get rid of that gentleman's presence; but he knew that Farmer Fielding was a good Union man, and he believed that Colonel Eastworth was as loyal as himself—Ernest Rosenthal.

Colonel Eastworth, over and above his strong love for the Lutheran minister's child, had another great motive for remaining the guest of Dr. Rosenthal—it was this:—that under the cover of one who was so well known to be a staunch and loyal man, he might with less suspicion and more safety perfect certain plans. Under this roof he daily and nightly received many visitors with whom he held long interviews in his own rooms.

Dr. Rosenthal never dreamed of inquiring into the motives, conduct or character of his guest's visitors. They would come at almost any hour of the twenty-four, ring the bell, inquire for Colonel Eastworth, and be shown up to his rooms, either to see him if he should be in, or to wait for him if he should be out.

And Colonel Eastworth was out a great deal, especially in the evening. At length, so well were his plans organized, that his co-conspirators knew very well at what hour to call and find him in; and he would be in his rooms all day busily writing and sending off letters, or receiving visitors; and half the night he would be out. Erminie saw but little of him at this period.

One evening when he came into the drawing-room, before going out, she gently rallied him on what she gayly called his 'going on.'

'Where are you off to now?' she inquired, with affectionate freedom.

'Dear love, the lodge,' he answered, after some little hesitation.

'I don't believe the lodge meets every night! And you are away every night!' she gayly remonstrated.

'Dear love, this lodge does meet every night,' he answered seriously.

'I declare one would think to see and hear you, that you nightly met conspirators who were darkly plotting "the ruin of themselves and land!"' laughed Erminie.

But how little she dreamed how much truth she had spoken!

Colonel Eastworth also laughed—a strange, unnatural laugh—that chilled Erminie's blood; and then he kissed her and went away.

Most of Colonel Eastworth's visitors were strangers to the old minister's family, and even to the rest of his staying guests.

But one morning Elfie had a great surprise. She was running down stairs, singing 'Gay and happy,' when suddenly she met face to face on the stairs her lover, Albert Goldeborough, who had just been admitted and was on his way up to Colonel Eastworth's rooms.

'Elfie!' he cried, stopping short and staring at her.

'Well, I do think! Where did you come from?' she exclaimed, stopping and gazing at him.

'I had no idea that you were in this house,' he said, meaningly.

'And I had no notion that you were coming to it. So you don't follow me here?'

'No, I came to see Colonel Eastworth.'

'It appears to me that there are a great many people [illegible] to see Colonel Eastworth. I [illegible] know anybody that sees so many [illegible] it is that old doorkeeper [illegible] White House? But you won't see [illegible] Eastworth this morning. He is generally in, holding a levee in his rooms all day long; but this morning the queerest looking fellow that ever I saw came after him and carried him away.'

'What sort of a looking fellow, Elfie?'

'A great, tall, broad-shouldered man, with a little tiny head. They got in a carriage together. I heard him tell the coachman to drive to Benning's Bridge. Now that is four miles from this. And if they are going any distance over that bridge, they won't be back till evening.'

'Humph! humph! humph!' muttered Albert, reflectively.

'However, as this house is certainly Liberty Hall, you can stop and wait for him,' suggested Elfie.

'I am not altogether sorry to miss him, just now that I have met you, dear Elfie. My business with him can wait till evening. And I wish so much to talk with you, Elfie. Oh, I am so glad to see you! It is such an unexpected pleasure. Are you so glad to see me, love?'

'I had a little rather see you than not, perhaps.'

'No more than that?'

'No—no more than that.'

'But I am happy—so happy to meet you.'

'Happy, are you? Well, you don't look so. And indeed I haven't seen anybody look happy for the last six months. Of all the glum wretches that ever existed, all my fellow creatures are getting to be the glummest. Happy! if that is your happy look, I wonder what your dismal one is like.'

'Nonsense, Elfie dear, this is no time for raillery. "Great events are on the wing." Men have heavy responsibilities just now, as you must know, living in this house. I cannot talk to you on the stairs, dear. Is there no place where you can take me for a tete-a-tete?' inquired Albert.

'Yes—there is the library and the drawing-room, both unoccupied at this hour.'

'Take me to the place where we shall be least liable to interruption.'

'Come to the library, then,' said Elfie, leading the way thither.

When they were seated before the fire, Albert inquired:

'How long have you been here, Elfie?'

'For several weeks. Ever since our house was burned over our heads.'

'Your house burned over your heads!' exclaimed Albert in astonishment.

'Yes, and we would have been lynched if we had not made our escape.'

'Well, the violence of these unionists in Virginia is certainly as horrible as anything in the Reign of Terror!'

At the word 'unionists' Elfie stared. Then as it dawned upon her mind that Albert was a secessionist, that he took her for one, and that he supposed her house to have been burned by the unionists, she grew very pale; but in the interest of her country she kept silent, and involuntarily she played the spy. Elfie, with her bitter experiences of secession persecutions, and with her keen perceptions, had begun to suspect the loyalty of Colonel Eastworth, and of all those strange visitors who came to see him in his rooms. But up to this time her suspicion was not strong enough to justify her interference in any way. Now, however, by certain words and tones of her lover, her suspicions were strengthened; and

in the interest of her host as well as of her country, she instinctively kept silent, and involuntarily played the spy.

'Yes,' continued Albert, 'the estrangement of the unionists are really beyond belief, though as yet I have never heard of their burning any house except yours.'

Still Effie kept silent. She would let him betray himself if he wished to do so, but she would say nothing, not even for the sake of her country, to invite a confidence which she did not intend to keep. If Albert was a secessionist and mistook her for one, and under that mistake volunteered certain communications, the revelation of which would be important to the interests of her country, Effie'a would listen to him, but she would say nothing to draw him out.

'Why did the unionists burn your house?' indignantly demanded Albert.

'The men who burned our house did so because we differed with them in the matter of States' Rights,' diplomatically answered Effie.

'Oh, of course, that is understood as the remote cause; but what was the proximate cause, the immediate provocation to such an outrage?'

'We raised a flag that was obnoxious to their feelings.'

'Exactly. In my neighbourhood they have torn down every secession flag that has been raised, and sometimes tarred and feathered the owners. But I tell you what, Effie, their day is nearly over. But you must know that, living in this house. We can never be sufficiently grateful to Dr. Rosenthal. His services to the good cause are so important that I have no doubt he will be rewarded with a high position in the administration of the government in the rising young Confederacy!'

Effie listened but said nothing.

'Ah!' she thought, 'he knows that Dr. Rosenthal's house is made the rendezvous of revolutionists, and he believes that Dr. Rosenthal is cognisant of the fact. Colonel Ellsworth could enlighten him on that subject; but then Col. Ellsworth is absent.'

'And now, Effie—dear Effie—knowing what a true-hearted and brave-spirited little heroine you are, I am going to tell you something. It is not quite a secret, Effie, else I would not confide it to you; for it is known to all the leaders of our party; it is well known to Ellsworth and to the gentlemen who visit him here; it is known to your host, and very likely it is known to you also. If it is, you can speak and save me the trouble of telling you.'

'No,' said Effie, 'I know nothing; I suspect a great deal.'

'Then I will tell you. Indeed, your sufferings in the good cause entitle you to the same sort of confidence that would be given to a man; and your presence in this house is a sufficient endorsement of your reliability. Besides, you can be of the greatest use to me. You can be, and I am sure you will be.'

'I would lay down my life if it were required of me in the good cause,' said Effie, compressing her lips and growing deadly white; for in Effie's bosom there was a terrible conflict going on between her love and her loyalty. It was very hard for poor Effie to look at the fair, handsome, manly face that so powerfully attracted her woman's heart, knowing that she was receiving his confidence only to defeat his plans—very, very hard! But Effie never flinched from the duty. She would have been ashamed to look herself in the face, in the privacy of her own chamber, had she failed in fidelity to her country. So with a tortured ear and aching heart she listened to her lover.

'They are making great preparations for the pageantry of the inauguration of their president, Effie,' he continued with a laugh.

'Yes,' said Effie.

'Ha, ha, ha, there will be a pageantry of another sort, my dear. Do you notice how many Southern men are quietly sending their women and children out of the city?'

'Yes.'

'It is to get them out of the way of this other pageantry of which I spoke. My little Washington is a southern city; it belongs to us; and a mere sectional president elect will never be permitted to take his seat here!'

'Indeed!' exclaimed Effie.

'Never!'

'How can he be prevented from doing so?'

'By force of arms!'

'By force of arms!' echoed Effie.

'Yes. Listen; all over Virginia—all over Maryland—there are bands of devoted and desperate men, organised and sworn to prevent Lincoln from taking his seat. Our people in Washington know this, and they are ready to co-operate with us. I bear a captain's commission in one of these bands. Colonel Ellsworth is my superior officer. We have three branch and one main rendezvous. And they are near the bridges crossing the Potomac and the Anacostia. Our plan is, on or before the fourth of March, to muster our several rendezvous, in the daytime of the night, to march at the same time over the three bridges; to surprise

Washington, and so take the city by assault,' said Albert, warming into enthusiasm with his negative.

'Oh Heaven!' muttered Ella, between her clenched teeth.

He heard her mutter something, but failed to catch the words; and he utterly misunderstood the cause of her paleness and distress of manner. He was indeed absorbed in his own subject; and as he continued to reveal his plans:

'Yes; the streets of Washington may run with blood; the houses of Washington smoke in ruins; but on the fourth of March, when Lincoln is expected to take his seat, the Confederate flag shall wave above the Capitol!' he exclaimed, rising in his excitement and pacing the library floor.

'God forbid!' panted Ella.

Still he was too absorbed in his own subject to hear her. After walking up and down the floor a few times, he came and seated himself by her side, and asked the question:

'Where is your father, Ella?'

'He went back to Virginia, a few days ago, to look after his interests there.'

'When is he expected to return, my dear?'

'Not until the inauguration-day. He wishes to be here then.'

'Do you suppose he knows what is really to take place before that day?'

'I do not suppose he does,' said Ella.

'No; probably he does not! Certainly he does not, or he would not have left you here exposed to the coming dangers. Ella, my darling! you must not be left here. As soon as I shall have seen Colonel Blatworthy and delivered the dispatches entrusted to me for him, I shall go back to Virginia. And Ella, my own girl, you must go with me!'

He had taken her hands in his own, and his face was beaming with love, and his voice was melting with tenderness as he spoke to her, and tried to meet her eyes.

But she suddenly withdrew her hands and turned away her head. She loved him and hated him at the same moment; her heart was breaking, and she wished for death. But she never dreamed of escaping from her lover. He continued:

'This is no time, my own love, for false modesty or womanly reluctance! I cannot possibly leave you behind me to the tender mercies of this city, filled with hireling soldiers, and this interesting over-excited population. You must go with me. You must be my wife, and go with me to Virginia. You must leave your father to his own devices, and leave your country to her own fate, and leave your home to the protection of my widowed mother. She is alone, Ella. She has no other one but myself, and no daughter at all. She will receive my beloved wife as a dear daughter, my Ella. Come, what say you, my own? Do not avert your head. Let me see your sweet face. Turn towards me; smile on me. Oh, my Ella, make me happy!'

'Oh! Leave me! leave me!' Leave me!' she exclaimed, in a passion of indignation, as she started up, flung off his hand, and walked across the room.

This time he heard her, understood her, and gazed upon her in astonishment, incredulity and agitation.

'Ella! Ella! is this acting? Or is it real madness? What do you mean?' he exclaimed, going towards her.

'Keep off!' she said, so shortly yet so firmly, that he stopped suddenly like a man on the brink of a precipice.

'Tell me what you mean by this, Ella!' he cried.

'What I mean by this. I mean to be true to my country. Next to my duty to God, I rank my duty to my country. And I will be faithful to her, though my heart should break in its fidelity!' passionately exclaimed Ella.

'Your native state is your country. To her alone is your allegiance due. She is about to secede from the Union; and she has a right to do so. And it is your duty to go with your state.'

'I deny that a state has any right to secede from the Union. Set up that doctrine and see where it would end!—in the utter dissolution and death of our country, for if a state has a right to secede from the Union, a county has the same right to secede from a state, and a township to secede from a county, and a farm from a township, and the barn from the farm, and the husband from the wife, and the child from the father!—and there you have disintegration and anarchy! Read Jerusalem Butler's Epistle not to the—'

'Ella!' answered the Secessionist, hotly, 'I am willing to admit your capacity for understanding the construction of a dress or a dinner; but I doubt your ability for comprehending the Constitution of the United States.'

'Comprehend it! The Constitution of the United States is written in language the plainest English that I have ever read, and I claim to understand my mother tongue.'

'Ella, you cannot claim to owe much loyalty to your native state of Maryland, after Baltimore.'

'But I do not mean to have anything done

native state, or native county, or native farm, or to my pap or to my two unks. In being true to the whole Union I am true to every part of the Union, to every citizen thereof.'

'But Virginia is only nominally in the Union. In a very few weeks she will be out of it, by the unanimous voice of her people, heard through their representatives in the assembly.'

'Fiddle! Virginia go out of the Union by the unanimous voice of her people, indeed. I am one of her people! and I would die before I would utter one syllable in favour of secession. My pap and two unks and a host of our friends are loyal Virginians who would shed the last drop of their blood in defence of this glorious Union of States that makes us one of the mightiest powers among the nations of the earth. And if Virginia is ever voted out of the Union, it will never be by the unanimous voice of her people, or even by the will of the majority of her people.'

'I tell you you are mistaken. Virginia and Maryland, too, will follow the glorious example of their chivalric sister, South Carolina, who—'

—'Albert Goldsborough, I am not going to stand here all day long, listening to you, I warn you that Dr. Rosenthal is loyal to his heart's core; so loyal that he does not suspect and could not understand disloyalty in any man. He is as innocent now as I was an hour ago of the plots going on under his own roof. If he knew of them he would denounce them instantly.'

'What! is not Dr. Rosenthal a secessionist?' demanded Albert in consternation.

'No, sir!'

'Nor your father nor your uncles?'

'No.'

'Elfrida, you have played a very treacherous part with me. You have pretended to be one of us, you have made false statements in regard to your persecutions in the cause of secession, and you have drawn out my confidence only to turn upon me,' said Albert, bitterly.

'Anything more?' inquired Elfie.

'Is not that enough?' demanded Albert.

'Yes, but I would like to hear the whole charge before replying to it. Is that the whole charge?'

'Yes.'

'Then I deny it in toto. I have played no treacherous part by you. I never pretended to be one of you. It was yourself who took it for granted that I must be a secessionist. I made no false statements about my persecutions in the cause of secession. I told you that our house was burned over our heads, and we had to escape for our lives. And you jumped to the conclusion that the outrage was perpetrated by the Unionists of our neighbourhood. I did not seek to draw your confidence out. You bestowed it upon me freely. If I turn upon you now, it is as a loyal heart turns upon a rebel.'

'Elfrida, I won't stand this!' hotly exclaimed her lover.

'Then if you won't "stand" it, you had better walk it. Marry you, indeed! Not if I know it. Gammon! If I were fool enough to marry you this week, why, next week, or next month you might secede from me!'

'Elfrida, I will not bear this!' exclaimed Albert, stamping.

'Then don't. There is no reason why you should. You know the way out of the house into the street, and you are at liberty to take it. I strongly advise you to do so,' said Elfrida.

He glared at her, and then striding towards her, took her roughly by the arm, and hissed in her ear.

'You have become possessed of our secrets. But beware how you betray them. For if you should, woman as you are, the vengeance of the Banded Brothers will surely find you out.'

'Bah!' exclaimed Elfie, 'what do you think I care for the vengeance of the Banded Brothers? I care not for them, Albert Goldsborough, even though they may track and kill me for what I am about to do. The hardest part of my trial, Albert, you will never know, and perhaps could never understand!' said Elfie, and she set the library door wide open, and then went to the corner of the mantel-piece, and rang the bell.

'What is that for?' uneasily inquired Albert.

'It is for a servant to show you the way to the front door, Mr. Goldsborough, since you don't seem to know it. Go! I will give you a few hours to get out of the city and hide yourself. Then I will go to the President and denounce your plan, that immediate measures may be take to defeat it.'

'You would betray me?' exclaimed Albert, striding towards her and raising his hand in a threatening manner.

'I would save you at the same time that I attempt to save the city, you and your companions have doomed to destruction. I am not good enough or strong enough to do my whole duty—to stop you where you stand, and deliver you up to the authorities. If I had intended to "betray" you, I should have permitted you to go on in deceiving

yourself in regard to my loyalty to the very last; I should let you go out of this room with the impression that I am your confederate; then I should slip away and secretly inform against you, and have you arrested before you could leave the city. But I am not good enough or bad enough to do that, Albert Goldsborough. I tell you in the most straightforward way that I am going to the President to denounce the plot and save the city!'

'To the President!' sneered Albert Goldsborough, with a laugh that seemed to cry—'Why, he is one of us!'

'Yes, I will go to the President and denounce this plot; and if he won't listen to me, I will go to General Scott, and he will save the city. But in the meantime, Albert Goldsborough, I will give you a few hours to escape in. I believe there is a train leaves for Baltimore and Philadelphia in an hour from this; and there is another leaves for Alexandria and Richmond in an hour and a half. May the Lord bring you to reason! Go!' she said, pointing to the open door.

'Elfrida!' he exclaimed, again advancing toward her, 'If you suppose that I am going to submit to the humiliation you have put upon me, you are quite mistaken! I insist——'

At that moment a servant, summoned by Elfie's bell, entered the room, and Albert broke off in his speech.

'Go!' said Elfride, in a low, stern voice, as she still pointed to the door. 'Go! there is no time to be lost either by you or me! If you do not obey me at once, I will summon Dr. Rosenthal and his two brothers, who are in the house, and have you arrested as you stand!'

'You are a young demon!' hissed Albert Goldsborough, grinding his teeth, as he flung himself out of the room.

'Attend that gentleman to the door, Catherine; and then step round to the livery stable and tell them that I shall want a carriage to be here by two o'clock,' said Elfie.

The girl bowed her head and went out of the room, closing the door after her.

And little Elfie, left alone, paced up and down the library floor, as a chafed young lioness might pace her den. Little Elfie had worked herself up into a very exalted state of mind. She was in a great passion of indignation against her lover, and, else, she was just a little inflated with self-wonder and admiration at the part she had played; but no more so than is many a hero and martyr on the battle-field or at the stake. There is no doubt that a sublime pride and self-admiration are great supports in such times of trial.

Our little heroine paced up and down the floor in high excitement.

She had discarded her handsome and beloved lover, in vindication of her loyalty; she had sacrificed her affections to her patriotism. And she was much prouder of that feat than she had been of beating off the mob who had assailed the flag.

And her heart was not broken, or even badly wounded. And she was more surprised at that experience than anything else that had happened to her.

'I had supposed,' she said to herself, as she walked up and down the floor—'I had always supposed, when people sacrificed their love to their duty, they felt great grief; but somehow I do not. I grieve for one who plans the destruction of his country. I break my heart for a man who tells me that he holds a commission in a band of desperadoes who are going to take the city by storm! turn the streets into rivers of blood! the houses into smoking ruins! and plant the confederate flag upon the dome of the capitol! Oh! when I think of it how I hate him. I oughtn't to have let him escape. No, that I oughtn't. I suppose he thought because he was so handsome, and because he pretended to love me so much, and because he knew I really did lo—lo—love him so much, he could persuade me to—to—to!' And here the little heroine broke down suddenly, and flung herself upon the corner of the sofa, sobbing like a very girl—sobbing as if her heart would break.

Heroism had its hour of triumph.

And now came the reaction. Elfie wept long and bitterly over the loss of her lover.

'It is all over between us now,' she sobbed; 'all over between us for ever and ever. And oh, I did love him! I did love him so dearly! And with all his faults he did love me so truly! And he confided all his plans to me so trustingly. And now I must turn on him and denounce him and expose him to capture and death! or else I must hide his secrets in my bosom and let him go on planning the capture of Washington and the destruction of the Union. Oh, my goodness! was ever a poor girl in such a fix as I am! Drat the man! why did he ever poke his nose into politics? And why need he come and tell me about it? And why should fate fix such a dreadful duty upon me? Bush! what's the use of asking any question upon any subject? Life's a sell! I don't know much, but I've found that out! And now I suppose I must go and do my duty. Duty! Bother duty! Duty's another sell! And I'm sure I look just as if I had

been drinking?' she said, as she met the reflection of her swollen face and inflamed eyes in the mantel mirror. '"Who hath redness of eyes?—He who tarrieth long at the wine cup!" No, my dear Solomon! but women who cry about the good-for-nothing men. Your experience must have taught you that, Solomon,' added Effie, as she turned away from the mirror and left the library with the intention of seeking her own room, to prepare for her visit to the President.

For in all the ebbs and flows of contending passions, Effie was as true to the country as a politician to his own interests.

'I never can trust myself to tell the story. I should become agitated and talk slang perhaps, and get myself and my information discredited. Take the city by assault! Turn the streets into rivers of blood and the houses into smoking ruins. Capture the President shoot and plant the confederate flag on the dome of the capitol. Heaven and Earth and the other Place! what a plot!' exclaimed Effie, as she sat down to her writing-desk and began to write a short, condensed account of the plan divulged to her by Albert Goldsborough.

When it was finished she put it in a blank envelope, saying to herself:

'I will not direct it to any particular individual; for if I do not find one high official dignitary at leisure to see me I must seek another.'

Then she put on her outer garments and sat down to wait for the carriage she had ordered.

It came at the hour, and she went down stairs and took her place in it. She gave the order to the President's House and drove thither.

Ah, with what a beating heart she got out of the carriage, ascended the broad stairs and presented herself to the porter. It was almost a relief to her to be told that the President could not receive any one that day.

'After all, I doubt if it would have been of any use to call on him,' said Effie to herself, as she returned to the carriage and gave the order:

'To the War Department.'

Arrived at that building, Effie once more left her carriage, entered the house and inquired her way to the office of a certain 'high official dignitary,' who must be nameless in this story.

Effie was shown into an outer room, where she found herself in company with about half a dozen other persons of both sexes, who were waiting to see the great man.

As she was the last arrival, she had to wait until each of these had been singly received and dismissed.

At last her turn also came, and she was ushered into the audience chamber of the 'high official.'

At first, on finding herself in that sublime presence, the little rustic trembled excessively, and could scarcely hold her letter [illegible] in her hand.

The great man had been greatly bothered and annoyed that day by office-seekers [illegible] and besides, he had breakfasted on pork chops and suffered from indigestion; and so he was much irritated and out of temper; and when he saw that the present troubler of his peace was a trembling little country girl, who held a paper that looked very much like a beggar's petition very shakingly in her hand, he turned upon her a stern, forbidding countenance, calculated utterly to overwhelm and annihilate her and her business.

But it had exactly the opposite effect, of rousing Effie and restoring her to herself and putting her upon her mettle. For Effie was conscious that she was performing a high duty, making a great sacrifice of her private affections to the public welfare, and rendering an important service to the government; and that she deserved praise instead of blame; and so she was in no mood to submit, to be scowled at by any 'high' official in existence.

'You needn't glower at me in that way, as if I owed you a year's rent and you like to take it out in a pound of my flesh! I haven't come to ask you for an office. Nor is this paper a letter of recommendation? I have come to lay important information before the department. How important it is you may see by a glance at the contents of this envelope,' said Effie, throwing her paper on the table before the great man and then going and flinging herself in a chair, from which she watched him.

Half angrily and half contemptuously he snatched the paper up, tore it open, and read its contents.

And with grim satisfaction Effie noticed how his countenance changed as he read.

Presently, with his eyes still following the lines, he put out his hand, and rang the bell that stood upon his table.

A messenger answered it.

Then he—the 'high,' wrote a few lines at the end of that paper, placed it in another envelope, directed it, and put it in the hands of the messenger, saying:

'Take this to its address.'

When the messenger had bowed low

and left the room, the great man turned to Hilo.

'You have rendered good service, and I thank you for your zeal. You can withdraw.'

And Hilo arose, bowed, and left the room.

'It is done! It is done! I wonder if they will hang him?' she gasped, as she sank, sobbing into the cushions of her carriage.

'And the next thing I have to do,' she said, as she recovered from her fit of weeping, 'is to inform Dr. Rosenthal. And then Erminie will have to part with her lover, too. Oh, dear me! I begin to agree with Britomarte! I begin to think men are demons!'

When the carriage stopped at Dr. Rosenthal's, she got out and dismissed it, and went into the house and inquired for her host.

And when Catherine informed her that the doctor had gone so far as Baltimore with his two brothers, who had departed for New York, and that he would not be home until the arrival of the last train late at night, Hilo felt like a condemned criminal respited for one day.

'Thank heaven, I shall not have that other trial to meet until to-morrow,' she thought, as she went up into her own room, threw off her wrappings, and sank down upon her bed, in the collapse of despondency.

'I am sure I do not know,' she sobbed, 'why I or any woman should make any sacrifice for the sake of the country. What have we to do with the country? Why should we devote our time, labour, money, life, health and happiness to the country, as many of us will do, if this comes to a civil war? We have all share in the administration of the government, no voice in the election of its officers! I declare it is a burning shame to the manhood of America. I wish Britomarte would come home. I would join her in a war against this great and grievous wrong. It was very good in her to go off to the antipodes to reform the heathen, when she knew very well there was so much to reform in the Christian at home. If we women were not angels, we would let the country, and the men, too, go to the devil. But being angels, we must love the one and take care of the other. Laugh ho! Oh, dear! Life is a great ball, and in most are the spectators,' sighed Hilo, giving up in despair of herself and her fellow mortals.

And Hilo's meetings of her loyal society served the interests of the country?

I do not know. The answer of the high officer to whom she gave the secret information was:

'You have rendered good service, and I thank you for your zeal. You can withdraw.'

But this answer might only have been a polite manner of dismissing her. So I do not know whether the authorities acted solely upon the information given them by this young girl, or whether they had still more precise and trustworthy advices of the plot against the city; but within twenty-four hours after Hilo's visit to the War Department, detachments of the military were sent to guard the bridges over the Potomac and the Anacostia, and every approach to the city was picketed, and if Hilo saved the city, she never asked or received acknowledgment or reward for her services, and never took advantage of her position to seek office or entailment for herself or her friends.

CHAPTER XXXII.

ARTHUR'S GREAT SORROW.

I tell thee what I would not tell
For love of Heaven, or fear of hell—
Tell thee, as lovers should, heart free
Something to prove my love of thee.
—*Browning.*

When Albert Goldsborough was turned out of the library by his indignant little lady love, he did not go out of the house as she had commanded him to do. He passed cavalierly by the staring and stupefied servant who had been ordered to attend him; and saying that he should go to Colonel Eastworth's rooms and wait for his return, ascended the stairs.

Catherine slipped after him, opened Colonel Eastworth's door, and showed the visitor in; and then, thinking that she had literally obeyed orders in attending the gentleman, she returned to her duties in the lower regions of the house.

Meanwhile, Albert Goldsborough threw himself into a chair before the fire to wait for Colonel Eastworth.

Three long hours he had to wait. The time hung heavily on his hands. He read a little from the newspapers that lay scattered over the table; he walked about restlessly; looking into all the cupboards, and opening all the windows; glanced into the pockets of the round table to improve the time, by finding letters that lay hidden on the envelopes. One letter, and that was to his mother, a country lady, gave him the information that Colonel Eastworth was to be married in Virginia; and a third, to whom was Hilo—this last full of complaining love and tender

reproaches. He was still engaged in writing this letter, which threatened to be an interminable one, when love-letters rapidly are, when the door was suddenly flung open, and Colonel Eastworth rushed into his room.

'You here?' he exclaimed, on meeting his visitor.

'Yes, colonel,' said Albert, rising and hastily rolling up his love-letter and thrusting it into his pocket.

'Have you received anything?' he inquired, coming up to the table, and speaking in a low voice.

'Three, colonel,' replied the young lady, delivering his dispatches.

Colonel Eastworth dropped into his chair, tore open the packet, and took the papers, commencing on their contents as he went on.

'So,' he muttered, 'I will do nothing until the legislature has acted. It also holds back, until the ordinance of secession is formally passed. J. is waiting for state light, and making the affair a matter of prayer. But M. S. and W. are ready to take the field now, each with a following of more than a thousand men. Good! I predict that when Washington is sure, those faint-hearted, purblind fellows who cannot make up their minds, but must needs wait for more light, will be brought up a little, and be able to see their duty, as their interest, which, with such inducements, means the same thing.'

The remainder of the document was read in silence and with a lowering brow. Then he drew a quire of paper before him, took a pen, and rapidly indited a letter, which he folded, sealed, and put into the hands of the young man, saying—

'I am sorry to send you off again in such a hurry, before you have even had time to rest, Guldeborough; but it is absolutely necessary that this should be in the hands of S. before to-morrow morning. There is to be a meeting at Wilds' Hall to-morrow evening, and he must be present; for the final arrangements as to the precise time and mode of the assault will be discussed and decided upon.'

Albert Guldeborough received the packet; but instead of starting immediately on his mission, he hesitated and dropped his eyes upon the floor.

'Well, what now? You have something to tell me?' exclaimed Eastworth.

'Yes, colonel, I have. You see my prospects in this house, A little, prying imp, in the form of a servant girl, has got wind of our plot, and [illegible] for the authorities and to our ruin.'

'The demon! this cannot be true!' exclaimed Colonel Eastworth, in consternation.

'It is certainly too truly, colonel. She has threatened to denounce us all. And she will surely carry out her threats.'

'What girl is this?'

'Little Hilton Fielding.'

'Ah! the little serpent! And to think that such a little, insignificant creature should be able to do so much harm!'

'Ay, colonel! a worm may harbor a hole that shall sink a ship of the line!' said Albert Guldeborough.

'Yes, yes. Now I must hasten my departure. It is very fortunate for my plans that old Bloomthal has gone off to Baltimore, to see his brothers that far on their way to New York. And that he will not be home until late to-night. I can leave a letter of adieu to him. But, Albert, how did this girl manage to discover so much?'

'Who can tell?' replied young Guldeborough evasively, for not for the world would he have confessed to his colonel his own indiscretion in betraying his secrets to Hilton, before he could be sure of her sentiments on the subjects of secession.

'I suppose the little witch has been eavesdropping. There are too many doors to this apartment to make it a safe consultation room,' said Colonel Eastworth, sagely.

'There are,' admitted Albert, with a sigh.

'Well, in any case, in a very few days I should be obliged by expedience to withdraw from the house; and this discovery has at most but accelerated my action. It is fortunate that old Bloomthal is out of the way. Well, good day, Albert. I must really send you off at once,' said Colonel Eastworth, holding out his hand.

'And I must really go off at once,' echoed young Guldeborough, respectfully imitating his superior officer as he left the room.

Colonel Eastworth, left alone, sank down into his chair, and fell into the moody meditation so frequent with him of late.

Born of an old historical family, whose names were identified with the chronicles of the country; whose men were all brave, whose women were all pure; nurtured in the highest principles of truth and justice; tried and proved in the legislative halls of his native state [illegible] the battle-plains of Mexico, [illegible] of whom a few months [illegible] Colonel Eastworth was a man of stainless honour and glorious fame. But he believed in the absolute sovereignty of each single state [illegible] Federal Union; in the absolute right of each state to secede at will from

the Union; and in his own allegiance due solely to his native state.

Thus, warped by the doctrine of States' Rights, and tempted by the fiend Ambition, he had been won over to the cause of the Southern Confederacy. Not, however, without a severe struggle did he win his own consent to abandon the old flag that had been the idol of his boyish worship; for which in his bright and blameless youth he had shed his blood and risked his life; under which he had gained a nation's gratitude and a hero's crown. This struggle over, all the rest was easy enough—easy as, 'the descent to hell' is said to be. The doctrine of States'Right admitted, the other doctrines of Expediency naturally followed as an excuse for all manner of dishonorable action. This Expediency led him to lend the powerful aid of his astute intellect and military experience to the hands who were planning the capture of the city and the seizure of the President-elect.

After some minutes of moody thought, Colonel Eastworth arose, went down stairs to seek Erminie. He found her in the drawing-room, toning down the gas which had just been lighted, and putting those last delicate finishing touches on the artistic arrangement of the room of which only the young mistress' hand seemed capable.

'I am happy to find you alone, sweet love,' he said, gliding to her side.

'And I am very happy to be alone to receive you,' answered his betrothed, with confiding frankness. 'I love my friends very dearly; but, oh! indeed I am not so very sorry that the company is gone for the present. We could not have a word apart while they were here, could we, Eastworth?'

'No, sweetest girl, we could not! we could not! And did you miss our tete-a-tetes so much, mine own?' he asked, seating himself in a large rocking-chair, and drawing her towards him, much, very much, as a father might draw a daughter to sit upon his knees.

But the Lutheran minister's child was very delicately shy, and that beautiful shyness was one of her most bewitching charms. Softly and gently, and without offence, she evaded his motion, and passed in behind his chair, and knelt playfully over him.

'Oh, yes, yes! I missed, our tete-a-tetes so much! I missed you every day and every hour in the day.'

'Did you, my dearest one? did you, indeed, miss me—such a gray, wrinkled, crow worn wreck as I am?' he said.

She bent over him with caressing tenderness.

It was true! Six months before this time there had not been one silver thread in the raven tresses, or one line on the ivory forehead, of Colonel Eastworth; but now care had streaked his hair with gray, and the constant habit of frowning had planted deep wrinkles between his brows.

Erminie leaned over him with caressing tenderness, and pressed her lips to that spot on the top of his head where the thin hair indicated swiftly approaching baldness.

'I love you more for every white hair and every deep wrinkle; they are indices of thought and of suffering; and how can I but love you more for them?' murmured Erminie, laying her soft cheek upon his head.

'Come around here, my own, my own! I am your husband, or soon to be so! Sit where I can see your sweet face!' he pleaded, reaching behind him and getting hold of her hand and trying to draw her around.

'I will sit here! and look up into your face—ever the most beloved face in the universe to me!' murmured Erminie, softly, as she drew a footstool to his feet, and seated herself upon it, and placed her hand in his.

'Erminie,' he said, bending over her, and gazing and speaking with an earnestness approaching solemnity, 'Erminie! do you really, really love me?'

She looked up at him with a frightened aspect, and answered slowly:

'Oh, you know I do. You can not doubt me. What made you ask such a question?'

'Because, my beloved, I am about to put your love to a terrible test!' he replied, with an agitation that powerfully appealed to her sympathies.

'That is just what I wish you to do! what I pray you to do. Put my love to any test! any! so that I may prove to you how truly I love you! how much I would do for you!' she answered, in a low, fervent, pleading voice; and blushing intensely at her own temerity, even while feeling so anxious to re-assure her lover.

'Erminie! the test by which I shall prove your love, will be the severest tax by which the love of a woman like yourself could possibly be tried!'

'It will not be too severe for mine! I invoke the trial! I invoke it!'

'Erminie, do you love me enough to henceforth date your life with mine, for good and evil, for time and eternity?'

'Oh, yes, yes, yes!' But 'time' is not the test! for surely every woman loves her betrothed as much as that. 'But I love you,

sh so much more,' she murmured, hiding her face in his caressing hands.

'You love me enough to forsake all and follow me?'

'Oh yes, yes, did I not promise that on the blessed day when my dear father placed my hand in yours in solemn betrothal?'

'You will cleave to me, to me only, forever and ever, through good report and through evil report?'

'As my soul lives, I will,' fervently exclaimed the Lutheran minister's daughter, uttering the rashest vow that was ever spoken by trusting lips.

She did not even add the saving clause—'In all cases not inconsistent with my duty.' She did not dream of doing so. Her pledge to her lover was unconditional, because her faith in him was unbounded.

Nor was here the mere blind faith of a loving heart. It seemed to be justifiable; for Colonel Eastwerth was a man highly honoured by the world, both for his private character and his public services. How could she ever imagine that he would call upon her to forsake her father and her country?

Yet this he was about to do. This was the test to which he meant to put her devoted love. And now he believed that the time was ripe for the disclosure of his plans. Now he felt assured that she was truly and unreservedly his own—so bound to him, body and soul, that she was not only ready to suffer with him, but willing to sin for him, if he should wish her to do so.

'Erminie,' he said, looking down into her loving, trustful, fervent face—'Erminie, you have pledged your faith to me by a very solemn oath—"As my soul lives."'

'Yes! And I repeat it. "As my soul lives." And if there could be an oath more solemn and binding than that, without being profane, I would pledge you my faith by it.'

'Erminie, my Erminie,' he murmured, looking down on her with infinite tenderness.

'Confide in me, Eastwerth,' she whispered. 'I know—oh, I know that deep trouble and keen anxiety have oppressed your spirit for many months past; they have touched your hair with silver and marked your brow with furrows; but I love you all the more, if possible, for these signs of suffering. Confide in me, dear Eastwerth. Lay your burden on my heart. You do not know how strong a heart it is.'

'I know how tender a heart it is, my sweetest love,' said Colonel Eastwerth, in an agitated voice.

'Erminie,' he stooped and whispered, 'you are already, almost my wife.'

'Oh yes, I consider myself so. With us, you know, betrothal is as sacred as marriage,' she murmured.

'Then, my beloved, what I wish you to do is to become my wife in reality and immediately,' he whispered.

She looked at him with a surprised, perplexed, questioning expression of countenance, as though she doubted her own sense of hearing, or of understanding.

'I wish you to become my wife in reality, as you are in pledge, this very day,' he repeated, earnestly.

Still she looked at him in dumb amazement, not knowing how to answer.

'Do you hear me, my love? I wish you to become my wife in fact as you are in promise, this very day. This is the test to which I would put you, love,' he urged.

'But my father, dear Eastwerth, my father would not consent. And, besides, he is not here, and will not be here until late to-night,' she answered, when at last she was able to reply.

'No, my beloved, your father would not consent. It would be quite useless to ask him even if he were here; and he is not here. We must act, Erminie, without consulting your father.'

'Oh, Eastwerth,' she exclaimed, in a voice that was all sorrow and no reproach.

'Yes, love, we must. We must act without consulting your father. It is painful, but it is necessary.'

'Oh, Eastwerth,' she repeated, in the same tone of sorrow, as if she were not able to add another word.

'Sweet love, I know how hard it will be for you to do this; but it is your duty; and you will never flinch from duty, however painful.'

'My duty,' echoed Erminie, with a sadly bewildered air.

'Yes, dearest one, your solemn duty. Is it not the duty of the wife to leave all and follow her husband?'

'Oh, yes, yes.'

'Well, and are you not my wife, and should you not leave all and follow me? Have you not solemnly pledged yourself to do so, "As your soul lives?"'

'Yes, dear Eastwerth, when I shall be your wife. And I am almost your wife now, but not quite,' she pleaded.

'Erminie, you may be so in an hour,' he urged.

'Oh, Eastwerth, not without my dear father's consent. I could not—I could not strike such a blow to my father's heart,' she pleaded, plaintively, not as if she could

gematically resist his wishes, but as it she were imploring him to spare her the trial. He saw that and took an unscrupulous advantage of it.

'You do not love me,' he said coldly and bitterly.

He had never spoken to her so roughly before. She looked up at him in surprise and affright.

'No, you do not love me, or you would not answer me so,' he repeated, with cruel emphasis.

'Oh, I do, I do. Heaven knows how truly and how much!' she said, clasping her hands in the fervour of her feelings.

'Erminie,' he said, changing his tone from bitter severity to tender earnestness—'Erminie, I would not ask you to do this, were there not the gravest reasons. Shall I tell you what these reasons are, my beloved girl?'

She dropped her head upon her bosom. Her gesture might have meant assent or dissent—any. He took it as assent and he continued:

'Erminie, I am obliged to leave—not only this house, but this city, to-night—to leave, not only in haste but in danger!'

'In danger!' she echoed, growing very pale.

'Yes, in danger—and as a fugitive!'

'As a fugitive! Oh, Heaven of Heavens! what has happened!' she gasped, in deadly terror for his safety.

'I have been betrayed!'

'Betrayed!'

'You do nothing but echo my words, sweet love.'

'Oh, forgive me; but how can I help it? They are so strange and so alarming—your words. And I am all in a maze of bewilderment,' she faltered, trembling excessively.

'Do you not surmise what all this means, Erminie?'

'Oh, no, no! I do not—I dare not. I only know, whatever the mystery is, you are blameless in it.'

'Thanks, sweet love, for your boundless faith! But I am something higher and better than blameless, my Erminie, or I should not deserve your faith and love. I go out of this city to-night in danger, and as a fugitive; but I return as it, Erminie, at the head of an army, with banking drums and waving banners!'

She gazed at him in astonishment. His words were as unintelligible to her as if he had spoken in the Coptic.

'How do you understand?' he inquired, smiling.

Re-assured by her manner, she also smiled, as she shook her head and replied:

'I understand that my betrothed husband is all that is good, noble, honourable; but I do not understand his words.'

'My beloved Erminie, listen: I am a conspirator! One of the leaders in this second coming war of independence which is to be more glorious than the first; one of the builders of this second young republic, whose splendour is destined to eclipse the first. And when I ask you to go away with me to-night, it is to share the fate of one who would lift you up beside him to, perhaps, the highest position in the gift of the young Confederacy!——Why, what is the matter with you, love?' he suddenly broke off and inquired, as she turned from him, and dropped her head upon her bosom.

'What is the matter with you, Erminie?'

'My heart is broken!' she murmured, in an almost dying voice.

'Nonsense, my darling! I know what your professed principles are. I often hear you express yourself strongly in favour of this misery "Union." But I also know that, daughter-like, you take your opinions from your father, and, parrot-like, repeat the words as ours, without attaching much meaning to them. Henceforth, Erminie, you must take your opinions, not from your father, but from your husband. What do you say, my love?'

'I do not think that I took those opinions from my father. I do not remember the time when I did not know that treason——'

'Erminie!' he exclaimed in a voice so stern as to make her start.

'Oh, pardon me,' she said. 'I did not mean to speak so rudely. And I did not wish to offend you. And oh, perhaps I misunderstood you. Heaven grant that I may have done so. Oh, indeed, I must have done so! I am so stupid and bewildered. You are true to your country, are you not? Oh, tell me that you are, and I will ask your pardon on my knees for my momentary doubt of you!' she pleaded, clasping her hands, and gazing at him with imploring eyes.

'Yes, Erminie, I am true to my country; but not in the sense, I fear, you mean. I am true to my country. I am pledged to the support of the New born Confederacy, which is the only country I acknowledge!'

'Then, oh my heart, all is over between us!' she cried, falling down at his feet, utterly overwhelmed by this blow he had dealt her.

He stooped and raised her tenderly, and drew her to his bosom, murmuring:

'Erminie, my love, my love!'

She turned suddenly and threw her arms around his neck and clasped him tightly, as though she would have held him with all her girl's strength back from the desperate of ruin into which he was about to plunge.

'Oh! stops here! stops there to me?' the cried with passionate entreaty. 'Do not go down into that black gulf of perdition! Oh, do not! Stay here, stay with me! I will be so true to you! I will love you so dearly! I will do everything to make you happy! I will beg my father to consent to your wish and let us marry immediately. I will devote my life to you, if you will only stay with me and be true to your country—true to your noble self! Oh, how shall I prevail with you to stay? What can I offer you but my poor self? And I am but a girl, not worthy your love! But oh, Eastworth, I would give all I have in the world—I would give my life to keep you here!'

'Erminie, Erminie, (compose yourself, love!' he murmured, gently extricating her.

'Oh, Eastworth,' she broke forth again, 'sometimes a wrote I have looked at you and thought that Death might touch you—even you—I have known that I could not outlive you. But this is so much worse than death. Oh, Heaven!'

'Erminie,' he said, something her bright hair with his hand, and pressing his lips to hers that were.

'Erminie, love, all that passionate nervous nature of this time of your projections. My dearest love, look at the matter as the other side of this question. Admit for a single moment the possibility that I may be right!'

'Oh, Eastworth, I would give my life to find you indeed right! I would rather be wrong a thousand times than you should be wrong once! But I see this all too clearly to deceive myself. I have loved this Union so much. I have thought of her as the Promised Land, the New Jerusalem! the refuge of all the oppressed! the hope of the world! And would you arm a death-blow at this? Oh, think how weak she would be if broken up, and divided! Think how the old despotic monarchies of the East would rejoice over her downfall, which would prove self-government a failure during mankind. Oh my darling let me hold you both—let me hold you both! I would give my life—almost my soul—to save you from this vow!'

'Erminie, love, your speak from prejudice and from feeling, and not from reason and judgment. Dear love, I will not reproach you, though you have edited my devotion to my native State and her downtrodden citizens, but I will say that what I have done is done in accordance with my conscience, and I am willing to be judged by it. Will you hear my defence?'

'Oh, Eastworth, if I have said anything offensive to you, I do earnestly beg your forgiveness. But I did not mean to offend.'

'Will you hear my defence?'

'Oh, yes, yes!'

Colonel Eastworth began to plead the cause of Secession with all the arguments by which unscrupulous orators influence the opinions of people. These arguments are too familiar to all to need repetition here. But they made no impression on the mind of Erminie Rosenthal. She was not to be deceived by sophistry or persuaded by eloquence, or even won over by love. Her eye was bright, and her whole soul was full of light.

Hour after hour slipped away while he argued, persuaded and implored Erminie to unite her fate with his own, and accompany him to Virginia. And Erminie suffered, wept, but remained steadfast in her principles.

At length, as the time approached for his departure, and found her unmoved, he became angry, and gave way to cruel reproaches.

'You have deceived me, Miss Rosenthal. You have played the part of a heartless coquette. You do not love me, and you never have done so.'

'Oh, Eastworth, I love you more than life! Heaven truly knows I do!' she said, through her sobs.

'Words! words! words! I have only talk of love glibly enough. No doubt you could write what school misses would call "sweet verses" on the theme, but you cannot feel it, Erminie.'

'Oh, Eastworth!'

'Oh, you cannot, Miss Rosenthal. Love is faithful, is devoted, is self-sacrificing. But you know nothing of it.'

'Oh, Eastworth, I would sacrifice my life to save you if I could. Heaven truly knows that I would!'

'Words, words, words again! All that is easily said. You would sacrifice your life to save me. But in your vain to promise that, since no such sacrifice can possibly be required of you. You will sacrifice your life, which nobody asks you to do, but you will not go with me when I leave this place, a fugitive—you will not go with me though I implore you to do it.'

'It is because it would be wrong for me for me for duty and I dare not do wrong.'

'Words, words, words,' he said, [illegible] with bitter scorn. 'Farewell, Miss Rosenthal.'

And he got up and strode towards the door.

Quick as light she flew before him, intercepted him, and clasped him in her arms.

'Oh, don't! don't go! spare yourself! Oh, Mr. Eastworth! oh, my love, spare yourself!' she cried, almost beside herself.

'Will you go with me?' he stopped and whispered.

'No, never! I dare not do [illegible]'

'Then let me go alone, [illegible] girl!' he cried, tearing off her clasping arms, and flinging her from him with such [illegible] that she fell upon the floor.

He rushed up into his room, [illegible] sent out and ordered [illegible] carriage, and while waiting for it, heatily packed up his most valuable effects, and as soon as it came to the door, he entered it, and drove to the station in time to catch the train for Alexandria and Orange.

Some minutes after the carriage had rolled away, Elfrida chanced to come down to the drawing-room, and there she found Erminie lying upon the floor in a swoon.

In great alarm she rang for assistance, and then flew to the side of her friend, and raised her up.

Erminie opened her eyes, and recognizing Elfrida, burst into tears and sobbed passionately.

'Don't cry—they are not worth tears,' said Elfie.

'Oh, Elfrida! oh, Elfrida! if you knew—if you knew!' sobbed Erminie.

'I know all about it. I saw Colonel Eastworth drive away in a cab, with all his luggage packed in and around it. I know that your lover has gone to help my lover to plot against the safety of the city. But, thank goodness, I have been beforehand with them.'

At this moment Catherine opened the door and came in.

'Did you ring, Miss?' she inquired.

'Yes—more coal,' said Elfie, with great presence of mind.

And when the girl had gone, Elfie whispered to her friend:

'Keep a stiff upper lip; never say die, don't let the servants see us fret.'

'I must not let my dear father see me grieve. To prevent that must be my first care. But if it were not for him I should pray—oh, I should pray for death!' sobbed Erminie.

'Don't see it in that light at all! Long life to all true patriots, both men and women because you see the country [illegible] all. And now, Minie, you are hardly able to stand. Do let me help you up into your room before that [illegible] girl comes back,' said Elfie.

Erminie [illegible]; and Elfie took her up stairs and persuaded her to [illegible] on her bed.

'Now, the governor will not be home until the late train gets in; that will not be [illegible] eleven o'clock to-night. I will set up for him and have his oysters and lager beer [illegible] and I will tell him that you [illegible] and have gone to bed.'

'[illegible], dear Elfie! And by to-morrow [illegible] I hope to be able to meet my father with some composure,' said Erminie.

'And now what else can I do for you?'

'Nothing, dear girl, but to leave me alone with God.'

Elfrida stooped over her and kissed her, and then softly left the room and closed the door.

The six o'clock dinner that was prepared that day went away from the table untasted. There was no one to partake of it.

Elfie sent out and got some fresh oysters and lager beer for her kind host, and had a neat little table set in the library ready for him when he should come home.

He came in at eleven o'clock.

Elfie opened the library door and drew him in there, and helped him off with his wrappings and with his overcoat, and placed the easy chair near the fire, and brought him his boot-jack and slippers, and performed all the affectionate little services that Erminie was accustomed to render her father.

'Where is my Minie?' inquired the old man, extending his hands over the warm fire, when he had made himself comfortable.

'Gone to bed very tired, leaving me to be your daughter for this once.'

'And a nice little daughter you are, [illegible] dear. I wish Justin had taken a fan[illegible] you instead of to that Tammany H[illegible]'

'[illegible] do I! But he hadn't th[illegible] you see,' said Elfie, [illegible]

'And my Minie was tired! [illegible] poor dear. She has had a great [illegible] lately with so much company sta[illegible] house. I am not alluding o you, my [illegible] for you are a help and a God-send [illegible] Eastworth?'

'Oh! he has retired too, (from the establishment,') added Elfie, in a mental reservation.

'Ah! yes, well. I must have some supper now, my dear, since you are my daughter.'

Elfie rang, and supper was served, and then the old man and the young girl [illegible]

[illegible] and retired to their respective rooms. And dear, unselfish Elfie, now that her fortitude could be of use to no one under the sun, broke down and wept all night, soaking the pillow with her tears.

In the morning, when Dr. Rosenthal came down stairs, the first thing that met him was a letter that Colonel Eastworth had left in charge of Catherine to be delivered to him.

To his unbounded astonishment, that letter revealed to him that his late guest and promised son-in-law was pledged to the support of the Southern Confederacy, and had gone away to enter upon his new service.

'Heaven have mercy on my poor child!' was the first thought of the father.

Erminie came down to breakfast as pale as death and almost as still.

'I see that you know all, my dearest child,' said the old man, as soon as he saw her.

'Oh! my father, pray for him! pray that he may be led back to us.'

'I will, my Minie!—I will my angel child! God bless you!' said the doctor.

Erminie seated herself at the head of the table, and went through the duties of the breakfast service quietly, and after breakfast she went about her household affairs as usual. Later in the day Elfrida communicated to Dr. Rosenthal Albert Goldsborough's visit and revelation to herself, and also her own visit to the War Department and its results.

'Ah! ha! that was what hurried Eastworth away. But for Erminie's sake I will not call him ill names, however we'll he may deserve them. Heavens! to think I should have been so blind!' said the old man, whose astonishment at the [illegible] of his late guest increased with every hour of thought upon the subject.

In the course of that day a rumor spread through the city, which created a great excitement. It was to the effect that the War Department had received certain information of a large and well organized plot to seize the capital and prevent the inauguration of the President elect.

And everywhere citizens were enrolling themselves in military companies for the defence of Washington, and among the first names that went down [illegible] that immortal roll was the name of [illegible] Rosenthal.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

ON THE DESERT ISLAND.

Oh! winds that have made us your sport,
Convey to this desolate shore
Some cordial, endearing report,
Of a land we shall visit no more.
When we think of our own native land,
In a moment we seem to be there;
But, alas! recollection at hand
Soon hurries us back to despair.

While the storm-clouds of civil war, charged with destruction, lowered darkly over our dear native land, all was benign repose on the Desert Island where our young pair had been cast away.

The wreck of their ship still lay high and dry upon the rocks where she had struck. So fast was her position, with her keel impaled upon the sharp horn-like points of the rocks, that neither winds nor waves had as yet power to break her up or lift her off. It seemed as if she must remain there until she should gradually perish and go to pieces by the drying and warping of her timbers in the blazing sunshine. This state of affairs continued for two months.

Every day during this period Justin, Bitomarte and Judith passed over the reef of rocks from the Island to the wreck, and fed the animals there, and brought away as many of the stores as they could carry. But as the way was long and the work toilsome and as twice in the twenty-four hours the reef of rocks was covered with water, it was impossible for them to make more than one trip in the day, and so it took them a long time to remove all the stores—a time of much anxiety it was, for they were in constant expectation of some terrible gale that should break up the wreck.

At length, after many weeks of labour, they had brought away from the wreck everything that could possibly be of use to them on their Desert Island, and this, of course, included all the real necessaries of life, and stores of provisions enough to last them for years. All these things were carefully stowed away in the cases and grottoes of which their mountain was full.

It was not until all the stores were secured, that Justin proposed to bring away the animals; for they had been best off on the wreck as long as there was anything there for them to eat, and therefore they had been left there to the last. It was a work of difficulty, almost amounting to impossibility, to get these beasts over the causeway but Justin was not a man to yield to difficulty, or scarcely to impossibility. He carried the sheep over, one by one on his

back, and when they were all penned in the cover, he carried the half-grown pigs over, in the same way. Judith carried the whole pigs, by one leg at a time. And Britomarte took charge of the baskets of poultry. When these were all safely housed in the caverns of the mountain, two almost insurmountable difficulties presented themselves.

It was at the close of a warm summer day, and Justin, Britomarte and Judith stood at the opening of a cavern where the animals were confined. Justin, panting, had just thrown down the well grown pig that he had brought upon his back over the intervening.

Judith had taken away the rude plank gate and prop that secured the opening of the cavern.

"Now all the strongest are of the wreck except the two fat porkers and the cow. Each of the porkers are much too heavy a load for our united strength to move, Judith, and the cow is heavier than the porkers. I am afraid we shall have to give up riches," said Justin.

"Sure what should all be to give them up, at all, at all? Divil a bit will meself give them up, and perish entirely for the want iv me bones next winther, but shure the milk in me tay all the time."

"But, Judith, you know the porkers——"

"Oh, yis, more meself knows the porkers is too heavy to be totted and the craythure to be dhrv over the causeway, but look to this! Isn't there yez naygher think whole day out, and bring them over intoirely, to the cave."

"True, Judith. You are really a very wise counsellor. And though I do not relish very highly to undo Buccaneer's work, still we must 'look to live,' as the fortune's say, and really it is more merciful to the brute, to kill him ourselves, to kill him where he knows death is better than the slow torture they would suffer if left to perish on the wreck. So the case of the porkers is disposed of; but the cow, my good——"

"Shpake to the cow? Is it me? Sure, I'll shpake to yez when I'm shpoke to, but not before. Is it me ever let on to know the manin' iv the language every day iv me life, ashamin' Judith, Britomarte?"

"Well," laughed Justin, "shall we leave the fate of the cow in the hands of Providence?"

"Shure, is it the Divil then yis? And what else is yez to do? Isn't it Providence that's provided the craythure, and wants to thry how much she can stand?"

"But how to get her over with? Am I only glad to bring her over on my back, or will your undertake to do it?"

"Sure, what should all Grannie, not to walk over on her own legs? Faix, she'll not be throubling ye to go near her."

"But can she walk over? and will she do it? Remember, Judith, that we could neither coax nor drive the sheep, nor the pigs over."

"Lord help yez? Is Grannie a sheep or a pig? Bad luck to the sheeps and pigs, they gave us a dale iv throuble as they did. But Grannie, the darlint, is very her a sheps nor a pig, and no divil a bit iv trouble will she be giving us at all at all."

"Judith, I am not doubting the ability but the power of your favourite. Can she be coaxed or driven across the causeway, up and down the slippery sides of those ravines and through those streams?"

Judith favoured him with a half-contemptuous, half-contemptuous look, and then answered:

"Sure, ye know a dale iv Latin, and navigashin, and o ogy; but divil a taste do ye know of cows. How will I get Grannie over, do ye say? Aisy enough. I'll not say that a cow can go wherever a man can, for a man can climb a tree, which I niver saw a cow do yet; but I will say that a cow can go wherever a mule can, and a mule is more sure-footed than a horse itself. And so this is the way I'll get Grannie over: I'll just have her fasting for a whole day, and next morning I'll just mix a piggin full iv wather and wather, with a taste iv salt in it, and I'll just give her a call in after same, and call her after me, and every inch she'll follow me to the end iv the world. Love me and Grannie alone for knowing what we are about."

"Judith, you are a female Solomon. You deserve to be made premier of this island," said Justin.

"And sure what's a premier intoirely?"

"The premier is next in power to the king or queen of a country."

"Faix, then, if you're king, and she's queen, and myself premier, we're like an army that's all major-generals, so we are."

During this conversation, Britomarte had been standing apart, with her elbow resting on a projecting crag of rock and her beautiful head leaned upon her hand, with attitude of deep dejection.

Justin, whose eyes were never long away from her, saw her state and passed immediately to her side, and whispered gently his anxious inquiry—

"Britomarte, dearest, what troubles you?"

"My utter uselessness on this island. I

have neither your strength nor Judith's practical experience?' she suggested, very humbly.

'Let us reduce that statement to its lowest denomination,' as they used to say in the dame's school. 'You cannot carry a flat sheep weighing sixty pounds over your shoulders for a couple of miles, as I did. And you cannot make a twist-stitch to cast a sow over a rugged causeway, as Judith can. That is what you mean, Britomarte. But why should that trouble you, dearest? You can do many, many things that neither I nor poor Judith could ever accomplish,' said Justin, soothingly.

'Perhaps so, in the world of men and women. But here, on this desert island, where physical strength and practical experience are of the utmost importance—are indeed all-important, are everything—my powers, whatever they may be, are utterly thrown away,' she answered, bitterly.

'No, no, Britomarte, dearest, no powers conferred by the Lord are ever thrown away. By His providence, for some wise end, you have been cast away on this island. The same Creator who endowed you with your glorious gifts of mind and spirit, has assigned you this desert island as the scene of your labours, or of your—probation, Britomarte. If you cannot give much, you may receive much. If you cannot teach much, you may learn much, even here, dearest.'

'I am learning humility, I think,' she murmured, as if meditating aloud; 'if I could be of a little use in our small world, I should be content.'

'You are of use. You have accomplished your share of the work in bringing the stores from the wreck. You have laboured to the utmost limit of your strength. It is not to be expected that your physical strength should equal that of a man like me, or a peasant woman's like Judith. Besides, exquisite beauty and great strength are never united in a woman. You are too exquisitely beautiful to be very strong.'

'Equally wise, Justin, that you would use such high things to me.'

'I do not deem my wife to flatter you, Britomarte, for it is not wise to be flattery; nor even to please me, for I know that it will not do so; I only think it necessary to remind you that Providence in His wisdom has endued us unequally, you with a sterling beauty instead of with commanding strength. You complain of your weakness. I have tried to encourage you to believe that you have been useful according to your strength. And I will go further than that, Britomarte. I will show you that, even if you had not lifted a hand to help in our common work, the mere fact of your presence in it to me the one great, divine, inestimable blessing, for which I can never thank the Lord sufficiently. If you were not here, dearest, I suppose I should still, from a sense of duty, try to sustain life; but it would be a pain, a horror and a wretchedness insufferable. But you are here! and the desert island is a blooming garden, and life is delightful, and the future is full of blessed promise. It is for you that I live and think and toil. And in return I only ask you to exist, to accept my services and to be content,' he concluded, with all his loving, loyal soul beaming in his eyes and thrilling in his voice.

'Justin! Justin!' she sobbed, dropping her head upon her hands—'would to heaven you had never had the misfortune to meet me and love me! Then you would not have followed me here and been cast away upon this desolate shore. You did not deserve such a fate, Justin.'

'No, I did not deserve such a great happiness. But God is good. And I thank Him day and night that all these things have happened to me! that I met you and loved you; that I followed you and have been cast with you on this desolate shore,' said Justin, fervently.

'Ah!' muttered Judith, who from her stand-point saw this little interview, without hearing it—'ah, sure if there was only a praste convanient to marry them, steddy, all would be well entirely! But sure where's the good o' courting theself, when there's niver a praste to the fore?'

And having made this philosophical reflection, Judith put up the board and the prop that closed the opening of the cavern where the animals were confined, and then turned and said—

'And how wid yer good lave, will I get supper, Sor?'

'Yes, Judith, it is time,' answered Britomarte.

And all three took their way to the front of the great grotto that was Britomarte's own private apartment.

As yet they had been too busily engaged in the more pressing duty of storing the stores, to think of building houses. But the great rocky mountain was, as I said, full of deep holes; so full, that it might be compared to an immense cheese with huge thick and numerous. These holes were situated all up and down the sides of the mountain, from the base to the summit, and they afforded excellent shelter from the weather, for the animals, provisions, and the cattle and their owners.

The largest and best of these holes or caverns was Britomarte's grotto, which was

occupied solely by herself and her attendant Judith. In fine weather the family meals were prepared in the open space before this grotto; in bad weather they were prepared in the grotto itself, which then became the family parlour. Further up the side of the mountain, in a small irregular hole, Justin slept at night. And in the holes along the base of the mountain the animals were penned and the provisions were stowed away.

Justin had fitted up Britomarte's grotto with so much care and skill that he had made it as comfortable, if not as elegant, as a lady's boudoir.

Let me describe it.

This grotto was a vast natural cavern in the base of the rocky mountain. It had an opening about eight feet high by two wide, which did duty as a door-way. On the outside it was overgrown with a variety of wild luxuriant tropical plants and vines and creepers, whose roots were fastened on every crevice of the rock where there was any soil to nourish them, and whose branches, tendrils and flowers wreathed the front.

Passed through this beautifully festooned entrance, you found yourself in a light, cheerful place about the size of a large drawing-room. Its walls and floor were of a glistening white rock; and the first were as regular and the second was as level as could be expected in a natural cavern. The roof was high and dome-like, and terminated in a sky-light or natural fissure, through which let in the daylight, was too irregular to admit the rain, unless it came from a certain quarter.

To obviate this inconvenience, Justin had climbed to the top and covered the fissure with glass, brought from the ship. So that now it admitted the light only.

Justin had also dismantled the ladies' cabin of the wreck, to furnish and decorate Britomarte's grotto. A thick carpet was laid over the floor. A round table was placed upon it, and covered with a woollen cloth, and accommodated with an oil-lamp, which was lighted for the family every evening.

At the far end of the grotto was constructed two bed places, which were neatly made up and curtained off from the other portion of the apartment.

On the right hand side of the entrance, against the wall, was placed a side-table, supporting a row of book-shelves, filled with all the books that could be found in the wreck—the missionaries' books, the captain's books, the doctor's books, and the sailors' books—in all between two and three hundred volumes, of as miscellaneous a library as could be seen anywhere else than at a street book stand. On the front of the table below these book-shelves stood Britomarte's own portable writing-desk, which had been found uninjured in the cabin. In the table drawer was a good stock of stationery, which had also been rescued from the wreck. On each side of this table and book-shelves, which occupied a central position against the wall, stood a row of cushioned chairs.

On the left hand side of the entrance stood a large bureau that had been removed from the captain's cabin. Above this bureau hung a large looking-glass, and on the top of the bureau, on one side of the glass, stood an elegant dressing-case, and on the other side a beautiful work-box, both completely furnished. These had been taken from Mary Ely's state-room, and had so come into the possession of Britomarte. Near this bureau, against the wall, stood a large, comfortable sofa, that had been taken from the ship's saloon, and slowly and laboriously lugged by Justin and Judith across the causeway, on to the island, in the same way that all the heavy furniture and stores had been transported from the wreck to the shore. You will not wonder, now, that this great labour occupied many weeks. But Justin went at it cheerfully, and accomplished it successfully. There never lived a knight of chivalry who would have undertaken more stupendous tasks in honour of his lady love than would Justin for the love of Britomarte. And so he had performed almost impossible labours in the fitting up of the grotto. But I must finish the description of it. All along the walls were hung such pictures, maps, and other decorative articles as could be found on the wreck. In all the recesses were stowed away chests of clothing, table napery and bed linen. Each side of the centre table were placed easy chairs and foot-stools.

Never, from the days of the first shipwrecked passengers to the present time, was a cast-away so well provided with the comforts of a home. But then it must be remembered that almost everything was saved from the wreck, and that Britomarte had a devoted subject, who would have broken his back, if necessary, in her service.

At a short distance from Britomarte's bower was a clean hole in the rock, where Judith kept her cooking utensils and crockery ware, and where Justin had set up the cooking stove which he had brought piecemeal, plate by plate, from the caboose of the ship. Outside of this hole stood the deal table on which, in fine weather, the family took their meals.

All these were merely temporary arrange-

ments for the convenience of Britomarte during the weeks occupied in the removal of the stores and animals from the wreck to the shore. It was Justin's full purpose, as soon as the stores should be secured and the animals penned, to build a comfortable house for Britomarte, and to fence in pasture lots for the animals.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

[illegible]

But the sea-fowl is gone to her nest,
The beast is laid down in his lair;
Even here is a season of rest,
And we to our caverns repair.
There's mercy in every place,
And mercy, encouraging thought,
Gives ev[illegible] affliction a [illegible],
And re[illegible] miles man to his lot.

—*Cowper.*

When Justin, Britomarte and Judith reached the front of the grotto, Britomarte said:

'We will have our [illegible] inside, Judith. I will go in and light the lamp and lay the cloth, while you make the fire and put on the kettle.'

'Very well, ma'am. And I will slice some cowld ham, or fry the chicken that was kilt this morning?'

'I don't—' began Britomarte. Then turning to Justin with an entreating glance, she said—'You have worked so hard to-day. And you must be hungry. But you never do anything, or say anything, for yourself. Do tell us for once what you would like.'

'Anything at all!' said Justin, gratefully. 'It is not of the slightest consequence what I eat.'

'I do not believe it is to you; for I have tried to find out your favourite dishes—but in vain! for, while you eat well of everything, you eat heartily of nothing.'

'That is because I have such a wholesome appetite,' laughed Justin.

'And so you will not tell us what you like?'

'I like anything—everything!'

'Then, Judith, cook a little of "everything!" and put it on the table,' said Britomarte, archly. 'And then we shall be sure to be right.'

'Bedad maself will do that same right willingly. Lord kape me! I'm hungry enough to ate Crummie, so I am!' said Judith, scuttling away to her kitchen, as she called the whole in the rock where she cooked.

'Come in to the grotto, Justin. The dews are heavy and unwholesome to-night,' said Britomarte, kindly.

For Justin, in his delicate respect for the beautiful, proud, self-willed creature who was so dependent upon him, never ventured into the sanctuary of her apartment except at her special invitation.

He was glad enough of the invitation, and grateful enough to accept it. He followed her into the grotto. She was very kind to him this evening. There was a respectful tenderness in every look, tone and act bestowed upon him.

'Light the lamp for me, please, Justin,' she said.

She asked this because she knew how happy it made him to render her the slightest service, and if she forbore to say 'dear Justin,' her tone was as soft as if she had said it.

He lighted the lamp and trimmed it carefully, and set it on the table which she had in the interval covered with a white damask cloth.

'Take the seat, please, Justin,' she said, pointing to one of the easy chairs, while she sank into the other. 'We can sit here and rest, and talk a little while before Judith brings in the supper.'

'Thank you, sister. I am only too glad to be permitted to do so,' he answered, as he took the indicated place.

She said, 'we can sit here and rest and talk;' but for the present it seemed to be only 'rest.' A strange, heavy, [illegible] silence fell upon both—such a [illegible] as falls upon nature when all her elements are charged with storm.

Closely, but covertly and most reverently, Justin watched her. She sat with her elbow resting on the table, and her beautiful head bowed upon her open hand, and her eyes drooping. Her rich, dark brown hair had fallen forward like a veil, and half shaded her pale and pearly brow and cheek. She looked exquisitely lovely as she sat there, and Justin heaved an involuntary sigh—a deep sigh, that found its way to her ear, and perhaps to her heart; for presently she spoke, though without looking up, or in any way changing her position; and her voice vibrated with emotion as she said:

'Justin, you do not believe that I am ungrateful for all the invaluable services you have rendered me?'

'Britomarte! no; but I estimate those services as nothing. They were performed to please myself; and gratitude is not the sentiment with which I would inspire you, Britomarte. But you have placed an embargo on my lips. You have exacted a pledge from me that I will not speak upon

the one all-absorbing subject that fills my heart and brain, both day and night. It is with you to give me back that pledge. Will you do it, Britomarte?' he earnestly inquired, leaning forward to look in her face, and hoping much from the gentle spirit that now possessed her.

But she averted and bowed her head.

'Will you give me back my pledge, Britomarte? Will you let me speak on the one forbidden subject?'

She bowed her head lower and wept softly.

'Will you, dearest?' he urged.

'No,' she answered, slowly, and in a tone so low that he had to stoop nearer to catch her words. 'No, what would be the use? We are here on this lone Isle, cut off forever from all the human race. If we loved each other ever so devotedly, we could not marry, since here is no law to bind our union, no minister to bless it. We could only be to each other what I am always willing that we should be—a dear brother and sister.'

And her head dropped upon the table and she sobbed.

'Britomarte, love, dearest love, my only love, look up. I will not distress you. Heaven knows I would suffer anything rather than give you an instant's pain,' he said, kneeling by her side, and laying his hand reverently on her bowed head.

'Oh, Justin, Justin, what a curse to love one like me!' she sobbed.

'No, it is not! it is a great blessing—a divine blessing—to love—only to love—though one should never be beloved. But, Britomarte, mine own, are the reasons that you have given, the absence of church and state to bless and bind our love, the only obstacles to our union?'

'No, they are not the smallest obstacles.'

'It, by some intervention of Divine Providence, we should be rescued from this desert isle and restored to our native country, then—then, Britomarte, might I hope that you would bless me with your love and hand?' he pleaded, in a low earnest tone.

'No, no, never,' she sighed.

'May I ask you the reason for this strange, unnatural perverseness?'

'I can but give you the one that I have so often given—My soul is pledged never to love or to marry while the present laws of marriage, so degrading to the woman sex, exist.'

'You may pledge your soul never to marry, but "never to love," Britomarte, does not lie within the volition of your will,' said Justin gravely.

'It seems to me, that you are breaking the pledge from which I have never yet re-

leased you, Justin,' she said, more severely than reproachfully.

'Heaven forgive me, I am. But "woe is me!" he added, with a grim smile, 'how can I help it? Britomarte! when I do not break it in the letter, I break it in the spirit every hour of the day and every minute in the hour. However, I will drop the obnoxious subject, and talk of something else. "Woman's Rights," which is always an acceptable theme to you, my young reformer. I have often wondered, Britomarte, at your earnest, ardent, enthusiastic championship of women, and instead of her natural enemy, as you have been pleased to call man. I have suspected that all this must have originated in some very bitter wrong suffered at the hands of some either by yourself or by some woman very dear to you,' said Justin.

'"A Daniel come to judgment. Yea, a Daniel. Oh wise young judge, how I do honour thee!"' said Britomarte mockingly, as by an effort she threw off the tender gloom that had lowered over her heart.

Justin started up and walked the floor several times before he returned to his seat. He looked hurt, and it was no wonder that he did so.

'Justin,' said Miss Conyers, more gravely and kindly than she had last spoken, 'you are right. But a very slight acquaintance with history might have taught you that every hero and reformer who has keenly felt the wrongs of his kind, or of his country and understaken and accomplished anything to right them, has been first stung to action by some great private wrong of his own or his loved. If Lucretia had not fallen a victim to Sextus, Brutus and Collatinus never would have been aroused to free Rome. If Gesler had not put William Tell's son in peril to gratify a whim, the great Swiss patriot never would have been goaded to rise and deliver his country from the Austrian despotism.'

'And such if the British hadn't taxed the tea, the Yankees never would have had a revolution, so they wouldn't,' said Judith suddenly appearing before them with the supper tray. Judith had caught a few words of the discourse and had legendary knowledge enough to understand a little of it, and quickness of wit enough to aid her little mite.

'I believe you are quite right, Judith, just, sincere, what I meant to say was: We are both absolute that great wrongs must come home to us individually before they can be felt, hated and resisted successfully. Some time, Justin, I will tell you of the bitter wrong against those I loved more than life, which first opened my eyes

to the wrongs of woman and armed my soul against the despotism of man. Some time I will tell you, but not now. Judith wants to serve the supper.

'I shall wait impatiently to hear it, Britomarte,' he answered.

Judith arranged the supper neatly on the table and waited on the two while they ate. And when they had finished, Judith carried out the way to her kitchen; as she called her hole in the rock and there she enjoyed her 'mate and tay' in solitude, as she always preferred to do. When she had satisfied her appetite and set her kitchen in order, she returned to the grotto and joined Justin and Britomarte, and passed the evening with them, according to the standing order and her daily custom.

And this is the way in which they occupied the time. Justin selected from his store of books a volume of Shakespeare, and read from those old familiar, but new and fresh pages.

Britomarte took a wisp of crocheting cotton, and instead of using it in the manufacture of fancy mats and tidies, applied it to the more useful manufacture of stockings for the little family, and so seated herself quietly for the evening to the old fashioned work of knitting.

Judith sat down to darn the table linen. With great foresight, Judith had separated the old linen from the new, and had packed away the latter, saying—

'Troth we must make the old things last as long as possible by mending, before we begin upon the new things, for fear the stock will give out entirely before we die, and where should we get others itself?'

So passed the evenings until ten o'clock, when Justin closed his Shakespeare, and Britomarte rolled up her knitting, and Judith put away her work, and took down the Bible and laid it on the table.

Then Justin read a chapter in the New Testament, and Britomarte sang a hymn, in which the other two joined, and they closed their evening service with prayer.

And Justin withdrew to his own hole in the rock, and left Britomarte and her attendant to repose.

This was a fair specimen of their evenings on the Island.

The next day, as the season was now waning into autumn, and the mornings, as well as the evenings, were chilly, Britomarte and companions arose early and set the grotto in order, and laid the cloth there for breakfast; Judith went into her kitchen to make the coffee, and Justin brought in a bunch of small birds that he had shot upon the mountain, to be cooked for the morning meal.

After breakfast was over, Justin and Judith left Miss Conyers to keep house in the grotto and went out to the wreck to get the cow off.

Britomarte occupied herself in the meantime by preparing some very dainty dishes for her brother Justin against his return. She supposed that he would be very late in coming back; and she was right. The task he had undertaken was difficult and tedious;—not that Crummie was unamenable to reason or insensible to a warm mash; but that the way over which she was to be coaxed was long and almost impassable even by a cow or mule.

It was late in the afternoon when Britomarte saw the procession winding around the base of the mountain towards the grotto. And a queer procession it was!

First came Judith walking backwards, with her eye thrown over her shoulder to see where she went, and her hands holding a piggin of mash under the nose of Crummie, to coax her slowly but hopefully after the mash that was always under her nose, but out of her reach. Last came Justin, walking behind Crummie, and holding a light switch in his hand with which he occasionally hurried her lagging steps.

Thus driven from behind and coaxed on before, Crummie, like her betters, made some little progress towards her destination.

Britomarte laughed heartily as she saw the procession approaching the grotto.

Not until they had reached the open space in front of the grotto did Judith set down the piggin, into which Crummie immediately stuck her longing nose.

Justin threw away his switch. Judith stuck her arms akimbo and panted. Britomarte continued to laugh.

'Ah, b-dad, ye may laugh, as you may! But if ye'd had sich a day as me and the mather has had wid this baste iv a cow, sure ye'd not fale like laughing, so ye wouldn't! Troth, me legs is ready to double under me wid the weariness! Let alone a twist in me back-bone and a creak in me neck wid walking stern foremost and glowering over me shoulder to see the way. And to say nothing iv me stummich, as lank and limp as an empty purse wid the hunger,' grumbled the Irish girl.

'Never mind, Judith. I have got the supper all ready! coffee and "tay;" rice cakes and biscuits; and roast chicken and

broiled ham; and all you have got to do is to eat it,' said Miss Conyers, kindly.

'Ah, bodad, I must look out for Crumble, the creature, first! Sure I've been minding her all this long way wid a warm mash, till it has got as cowld as death itself now! And I must mix her something fresh and warm to comfort her poor cowld stummick!' said Judith, heaving a deep sigh and going off to her kitchen.

'Justin, dear,' said Britomarte, softly, 'you are quite tired out. You exhaust yourself in our service, Justin. Go now into our little den, where you will find clean towels and pure water, refresh yourself with a wash, and then come down into the grotto, where supper is ready and waiting for you.'

Justin snatched her hand, pressed it to his lips and started off to do her bidding, feeling that he would have undertaken twenty times as much labour as he had performed that day to win such kind words from her lips.

He soon returned and passed another calm if not happy evening in the society of his best beloved.

The next week was the most unpleasant and uncongenial period that Justin had ever experienced. It was so upon account of its repugnant occupations. It was passed on the wreck in the revolting but necessary duty of slaughtering the porkers and cutting them up and salting them down. Judith assisted him in the packing and salting the pork—not in barrels, but in small tubs with handles, such as could be carried across the causeway by hand. This work employed them the whole week; so that it was Saturday night before the last tub of salt pork was brought over and stowed away with the rest of their provisions.

On the Monday following Justin began his buildings. Among the necessaries brought from the wreck was a box of carpenters' tools and a grindstone. First he put his tools in complete order. Then he went to work and cut posts and split rails and fenced in a lot where the cattle, whose health was suffering from confinement, might roam without danger of straying away. With only his own labour and Judith's occasional help, it took Justin a long time to complete this piece of work. And in the meanwhile the season still waned and the climate grew cold and dark. The wet season, the winter of this latitude, was rapidly advancing upon them—so rapidly that Justin judged it best to defer the building of his house until the winter should be passed.

He went to work instead to make the grotto into winter quarters for Britomarte.

Where the centre-table had stood he placed the cooking-stove that had been rescued from the wreck. And all the pipe that he could find or manufacture out of rough materials with rough tools he put upon it, until it reached the flue of rock in the roof, by which the smoke could escape.

'This arrangement, while it makes you more comfortable, will bring us all into closer quarters, my dearest, since it is the only fire that we can have,' said Justin, as he lighted the first fire in the stove.

'Oh, Justin! as if I could be so selfish as to object to that. My brother! the grotto is yours, not mine. And if it were solely mine, you should be as welcome to it as I am myself. Move? I move so, Justin?' she earnestly answered.

He pressed her hand and turned away. Sometimes her tender words and looks gave him less pleasure and pain, because of the barrier that was between them. Life grew very monotonous during the wet season of many months.

In the spring Justin commenced the building of his house; but on account of rough material and imperfect tools and for the lack of help, the work progressed very slowly.

Then more than a year passed since they were first cast upon the Desert Island.

They had given up all expectation that any roving ship should come near enough their isle to discover the signal flag that they always kept flying from the summit of the mountain, though every day Justin paid a visit of ceremony to that flag and took a look out at sea through his telescope.

Nearly two had passed, and no incident worth recording had happened, when one night their island was visited by a most tremendous hurricane. It raged all night, and only subsided in the morning.

At mid-day, when all was over, Justin, Britomarte and Judith walked up to the top of the mountain to see what had become of the wreck that had remained there for twenty months, high and fast upon the rocks, and perishing slowly by the dry rot.

Justin arranged the telescope and took a sight. And what did he see?

Not the wreck; for the last vestige of the wreck was broken up and carried away by the winds and waves in the last night's tempest.

He saw a sail! a strange sail, with a strange flag, bearing down upon the island.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A STRANGE SAIL.

How sudden do our pleasures vary hour,
And how uncertain every good we have!
Hope oft deceives us; and our very joys
Wish with fruition, pall and turn away.
—Middleton.

'What is it, Justin? Oh! dear brother, what is it?' eagerly inquired Miss Conyers, almost losing her presence of mind in the vehemence of her anxiety.

'It is a sail—a strange sail. Compose yourself, dear Britomarte,' answered Mr. Bergenthal, without removing his eye from the glass.

'A sail!' she repeated, breathlessly.

'Yes, dear!'

'Oh, Justin!'

'It stands on towards the island.'

'She sees our signal!'

'No, I think not unless the captain's glass is better than mine; for with mine I cannot make out her colours yet, and our signal is no more conspicuous.'

'Are you sure she is coming in here?'

'Yes.'

'But why, unless she sees our signal?'

'She has been driven out of her course by the gale of yesterday; but, probably she has safely outridden the storm. She may be coming hither in search of fresh water or wood.'

'Oh, Justin, if she should strike that sunken reef or rocks on our poor ship did!'

'She will not do so, dear! She is steering clear of the rocks and for that little cove to leeward of them.'

'Oh, Justin, Justin, then she will surely anchor there. And we—we shall be rescued! Oh! we shall see civilized beings and our native land again! The thought makes me real with joy. And—Augustus?' exclaimed Miss Conyers, really growing dizzy with emotion, and clasping the big-eared for support.

'Dear sister, calm yourself.'

'Ah, how can I? Our case seemed so hopeless! and now the thought that we shall be rescued and taken back to our native country overwhelms me. Oh, to leave this! to go home! it is like bursting the bonds of the grave, and rising from death to life! To go home—to go home! Oh, Justin, that ship draw near? Are you sure she is coming? Does her head to steer any cpuite?'

'Sure.'

'At what rate does she seem to sail? Is she making rapid progress?' persisted Britomarte.

'Ann, dear Ann, do you see anybody coming?' said Justin, gaily, turning his head toward her. Then he gravely answered: 'She is making very rapid progress, though I cannot tell you at how many knots an hour she is sailing. There! I can see her colours now.'

'Yes can! What are they? English? Dutch?'

'I think they are our own stars and stripes—the most beautiful national colours that fly.'

'Oh, Justin—oh, Justin! Our own dear star-spangled banner! This would be too much joy.'

'I think it is our flag. I am not sure, because I cannot yet see very distinctly. I think it is, because I see the red and the white; but I cannot make out the blue field with the white stars.'

'That would not be so conspicuous against a back-ground of blue water and white foam; but you will see the whole presently,' said Miss Conyers.

Justin continued to gaze through his telescope at the stranger for a few minutes longer, and then he spoke:

'Britomarte!'

'Yes, Justin.'

'They are not the stars and stripes.'

'Oh, Justin! I am so sorry! But then we ought to be glad and grateful for any flag that should come to our rescue. What is it, then, Justin? The union jack; that would be the next best thing.'

'No, it is not the union jack.'

'What is it then? Can't you speak and tell us, dear Justin?' said Britomarte, a little impatiently.

'The truth is that I myself don't know. I thought I was familiar with the colours of all nations, but I cannot make these out at all.'

'How strange. What are they like?'

'Like bars—red, white and red. I do not recollect them as the colours of any nation on the face of the earth.'

'Nonsense! You have forgotten! Let me look, Justin. I am familiar with the flags of all nations,' said Britomarte, impatiently.

He adjusted the telescope for her sight, and she took a long and silent view.

'What do you make of the flag?' inquired Justin, with good-humoured sarcasm.

'Red—white—red. I can make nothing of it whatever. I never saw it before.'

'Judith, you are an old salt, and have seen many a strange flag in the ports where

you have stopped in your voyages to and from India. Take a look at this ring, and tell me if you ever saw it before,' said Justin, as Bittemarte retired from the telescope.

'Sure and so I will. Faix, iv it was the ship iv purgatory itself, with Ould Nick at the helm, I'd be glad to hail it, so I would, if it would take us off this beastly iv an island,' said Judith, taking her place at the telescope and lighting the object.

'Well, can you make the flag out?' inquired Justin.

'Divil a bit! I never saw the likes iv it before in all the days iv me life. Sure and I'm thinking it must be a pirate or a smuggler!' said Judith.

'You may be right, Judith, though how you fortold you should be!' answered Mr. Rosenthal.

'Justin!' exclaimed Bittemarte, who now replaced Judith at the glass—'Justin! she must be a pirate! She carries guns! I can see them.'

'I know she carries guns; but it does not follow from that circumstance that she is a pirate. She may be an armed merchantman.'

'Sailing under no recognized flag, Justin? Would not an armed merchantman sail under the colours of her country?'

'Most likely.'

'And if this should be a pirate?'

'Yes, if she should. The contingency is not a pleasant one. Judith, we must go down the mountain, my good girl, and hide all the animals in the holes of the rocks; for, if this strange sail should prove to be a pirate coming here in search of wood and water, she would be sure to make very free with all our stores, and especially with the beasts?' said Justin, uneasily.

'Troth would she! And sure if the crew was hungry for fresh beef itself, they'd kill and ate Crummie, the creyture, in less time nor I could milk her, so they would!' said the Irish girl.

'Come, let us go,' urged Justin, taking up his telescope.

The three turned their steps down the mountain side, and employed the next hour in driving the animals into the caverns at the base of the mountain; and closing up the openings to those caverns, not with boards—which would have attracted attention—but with green brushwood, arranged in such a way as to seem a part of the natural thicket that clothed the mountain side.

When this was done, they went to Bittemarte's grotto, and concealed as many of the most valuable articles there as they could find a hiding place for.

Then they walked down to the beach in the direction from which they expected to see the strange ship. They had no need to use their telescope now. And soon as they reached the sands they saw the ship at anchor in the little cove, while from her mast head flew the strange flag.

While they gazed, a boat put off from the ship, and neared rapidly towards the shore.

In ten minutes it touched the sands.

The six oarsmen laid on their oars; and the one officer, in a uniform as strange as his flag, stood up in the bows and lifted his hat in courteous salutation to the islanders.

'I had not exp. cted to find civilized people in that outlandish place,' he said, in English, to Justin, who came forward to meet him.

'You are welcome,' said Justin, shaking his head.

'I had not then that there was a European colony here. What is it—English?' inquired the stranger, stepping on the shore, and again lifting his hat and bowing politely to the women.

'There is no colony. We are not colonists. We were cast away on this island nearly two years ago,' said Justin.

'Cast away!' echoed the stranger, recoiling in dismay.

'Yes. We were passengers in the East Indiaman Saltana, bound from Boston to Calcutta, and which was wrecked upon these rocks below.'

'And so that was the fate of the missing Saltana!' said the stranger, gravely.

'That was her fate,' repeated Justin.

'Were any of her crew or passengers saved besides yourselves?'

'We cannot tell. They took to the life-boats. The first boat that left the ship sailed for the open sea, and we never heard of her fate. The second one attempted to reach the land, and was swamped. This lady and her companion were in that second boat when it went down. They were saved by means of the life-preservers that had been fastened round their waists. They were thrown on shore by the waves. The remainder of their boat's crew perished, I fear.'

'And yourself?'

'The captain and myself drove left on the wreck. The captain was washed overboard by a great wave. I escaped only by climbing first to the shrouds of the mizzen-mast, which was above water. When the sea went down, I managed to reach the shore over that reef

of reefs, at the end of which our ship had struck.

'And where our ship had very nearly been left in the lurch ourselves. You have been here nearly two years, you say. Good heavens! how have you subsisted?'

'Partly by the natural productiveness of the island,' said Justin, evasively.

'And how have you got on with the natives?'

'There are no natives except beasts, birds, reptiles and insects.

'Then the island is uninhabited?'

'By men? Yes, except ourselves.'

'And you have been here nearly two years. Heavens! And in all that time none no ship from home?'

'No ship from anywhere. I think this island is out of the usual course of ships.'

'Yes, we were driven far out of our course, and clean out of our reckoning, before we saw it. Two years! And yet the dress of the young lady and her attendant is just as neat as though fresh from the hand of the innocress,' said the stranger, incredulously.

'We managed to save a few necessaries from the wreck; and clothing, soap, starch, and flat irons were among them,' Justin explained with a laugh.

'Humph! nearly two years on this desert island, without news of the world outside! Without telegrams, letters or newspapers! How, in heaven's name, have you managed to endure life?'

'Indifferently well. Do we look as though we suffered from ill-health or low spirits?' inquired Justin.

'No, that you don't. But your Eden has an Eve. Oh, that the desert were my dwelling-place, with one fair spirit for my minister! You have two. Happy man! The fair Scourge has not one.'

'The "fair Scourge,"' echoed Justin.

'My ship out there, of which I am the captain, at your service!'

Justin bowed and then said—

'My name is Rosenthal. If you will give me yours I will present you to the lady.'

'My name is Spear, for the want of a better.'

'Miss Cheyne,' said Justin, stepping a few paces towards Britomarte, 'Captain Spear, of the fair Scourge.'

Captain Spear bowed very low. Miss Cheyne bent slightly, and then looked up to see before her a tall, hard, shrewd-looking elderly man, of about forty years of age, with weather-beaten features, and hair and beard and side-burns complexion.

'And the young woman with the demure-looking attendant?' inquired the captain, indicating the Irish girl.

'Her name is Judith Riordan. She is Miss Cheyne's attendant,' said Justin, coldly.

Notwithstanding which, Captain Spear turned, and bestowed the maid with as deep a bow as he had bestowed upon the mistress, and a bold stare of admiration into the bargain.

Judith turned away, hugely offended, muttering:

'Bedad ye modest be thrying to come yer comether over the likes if me, ov ye nadent. Bless! don't like the looks iv ye.

Captain Spear turned with a smile to Miss Cheyne, saying:

'I hope you do not share your companion's antipathy?'

'If I did,' said Miss Cheyne, 'I should not show it to a stranger who comes among us, perhaps seeking relief for his own necessities; perhaps to rescue us from our exile.'

The captain bowed, and then said:

'Mr.—Rosenfeldt—is not that the name?'

'Rosenthal,' corrected Britomarte.

'Mr. Rosenthal tells me that you have been on this lone island nearly two years, and in all this time have had no news of your native land.'

'It is quite true.'

'You must have suffered intense anxiety.'

'No; I left no near relatives in my native land to mourn for me. I had one or two school friends; but they were too happily situated and too well cared for long to lament my unknown fate.'

'And you, Mr. Rosenthal—am I right?' said the captain, turning to Justin.

'Just so yer!' impatiently interrupted Judith—'but ye got no memory at all, at all? or are ye afeard thinking itself, that ye can't remember a gintleman's name, when yer afther hearing it so often. It's Rosenthal, sure—that, that that! There I wint that rested yer tongue, and have all staring at me as if ye'd ate me.'

The captain of the fair Scourge laughed, and once more turned to Justin, saying:

'Mr. Rosenthal, how have you borne this long separation from home and friends, and this utter lack of news from the world outside, for nearly two years?'

'As I hinted before, neither my health nor spirits have suffered materially. I left a venerated father and a beloved sister and many friends. I know that my father and sister have mourned me as dead, and that they continue to remember me with affection; but I also know that religion and time have combined to soothe their sorrows and regrets. As for the world from which I

are respected, I feel that the Lord took very good care of it before I was born to, and can contents to take very good care of it now that I am exiled from it.'

'Mr. Rosenthal, you are a philosopher.'

'Nevertheless, I shall be very glad to get back, with my companions in misfortune, to our native country,' said Justin.

'And it will confer upon myself more happiness than I ever conferred in my life to take you all back!' said the captain, earnestly.

'Thanks! I can well believe it,' replied Justin, warmly.

'Truth, maybe he's not so bad as he looks,' muttered Judith to herself.

Britomarte studied him with more attention than before. It was strange, but he impressed the islanders in opposite ways, for while his appearance excited suspicion, his manners inspired confidence—except, perhaps, in the single instance of his bold stare at poor Judith.

'Will you—' began Justin; but before proceeding with his sentence he went up to Britomarte and spoke apart to her, asking her permission to invite these strangers to the grotto. She gave it readily, and then Justin stepped back to Captain Spears and said:

'Will you do us the honour to come up to our home and take lunch?'

'Thanks—willingly. I should like to see what sort of a home you have contrived to provide on this Desert Isle,' said the captain.

'And your boat's crew? Can they not have their boat to accompany us?'

'By no means. I will not so far trespass on your kindness or the young lady's hospitality.'

'Ah!' said Britomarte, earnestly, 'believe me that neither Mr. Rosenthal nor myself would consider it a trespass. It has been so long, so long, since we have seen any other human faces than our own, that we are more than delighted to welcome you and your whole crew.'

'Thanks, young lady. With your kind permission, then, I will call them off.'

So saying, the captain walked a few paces towards the boat, and called:

'Here, Mulligan! Secure the boat, and you and your mates come off and follow us.'

Then he came back to where Justin and Britomarte stood, and said that he was ready to accompany them.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE CAPTAIN OF THE SEA SERPENT.

He was the noblest merchant-marl man
Who ever sacrificed ship, or ran a threat.
—*Byron.*

They walked on through a grove of palms and then through a thicket that clothed the base of the mountain, until they reached the front of Britomarte's grotto.

'You see it is to no luxury that we are able to invite you, Captain, but we will make you very heartily welcome to this "hole in the wall" of the mountain,' said Justin, smiling, as he opened the door, and drew aside the curtain that concealed the entrance to Britomarte's grotto.

'A palace for Fun and the wood nymphs, upon my soul!' said the captain, in sincere admiration, as he followed Justin and Britomarte into the grotto, and looked around upon its glistening white walls and brilliant skylight.

'We like it very much,' said Britomarte.

'Like it! Who would dwell in houses made with hands, when they might live in a fairy grotto like this?' exclaimed the captain.

Justin drew one of the arm-chairs forward and invited him to take it.

And Judith removed the woollen table cover, and replaced it with a damask table cloth, preparatory to spreading the lunch.

As plates, dishes, glasses, castors, knives, forks and spoons were in turn placed upon the table, the captain of the sea *Serpent* looked on with ever increasing astonishment. Turning his eyes from the well appointed table to the comfortable furnished grotto, he said:

'It appears to me that you saved a great deal from the wreck.'

'Yes,' said Justin cautiously, for he could not as yet feel full confidence in his guest; 'very the ship was cast very high upon the rocks, and when the sea went down, she was almost entirely out of the water, and we saved at least enough furniture from the cabins and dining saloons to fit up this grotto comfortably. The crockery in the dining saloon suffered most in the storm, for out of a mountain of broken glass and earthenware, we rescued only a dozen or so of whole plates, and indeed the whole plates are not entirely whole, for there is scarcely one that is not cracked or chipped.'

'It must have been a stupendous labour for one man to get all these things—especially the heavy furniture, from the wreck and to the shore.'

'It was the labour of months,' an

own,' said Justin, 'but I did my accomplish it alone. Miss Conyers brought all the right articles over and Judith Riordan, who is a model of strength, enabled me to bring the heavy ones.'

While the two men conversed, Judith, under the direction of Britomarte, spread the table with a cold ham, a chicken pie, a loaf of bread, cheese, and a bottle of brandy.

'Brandy, eh!' exclaimed the captain of the Sea Scourge, on beholding this last welcome addition to the feast. 'Brandy, too! you were very fortunate, as well as industrious. You must have saved a lot of it, to have lasted you nearly two years.'

'Nay,' said Justin, evasively, 'we saved some bottles, but we kept it in case of illness, and as we never required its use in that contingency, the store could not give out.'

'Then I assure you, if I were going to leave you a settled colonist upon this Desert Isle, I would not touch a drop of your brandy, but as I hope to take you all with me when I sail, I will gladly drink it to your health and happiness,' said the captain of the Sea Scourge, suiting the action to the word by helping himself liberally to the brandy.

'Sure if he's not a fraybeater himself, it's fray and stay he is entirely,' muttered Judith, as she passed Miss Conyers on her way to the kitchen. Britomarte smiled, and Judith presently re-appeared with a pitcher of water, which she also set upon the table.

And now, all being ready, Justin invited his guest to seat himself at the board.

'But where are the men whom you ordered to follow you, captain?' inquired the host.

'Oh, they are straggling in, I suppose. They will be here presently, doubtless. But, my young friends, pray don't waste this brandy on them, whatever you do. It is genuine old Otard, such as you cannot buy for love or money in the States, though you may pay highly for a lot of drugged Yankee rum that sells under its honoured name. Besides, my fellows won't appreciate it, and it is desecration of good liquor to give it to men who don't know it when they taste it. Give them the cheapest whiskey that you may happen to have to throw away,' said the captain, filling for himself another glass, which he held up to the light with the glance of a connoisseur.

'Indeed, I think I am no better judge of liquors than the most ignorant of your men. We have a spare cask of whiskey, and your men are welcome to it, though whether it is good, bad or indifferent, I cannot tell,' said Justin, who was busy in cutting an the chicken pie, with which he liberally helped his guest.

'Children, by all that's gracious! Did you save chickens enough to stock your poultry yards my friend?' inquired the captain.

'We saved a few from which we raised other broods,' answered Justin rather reservedly, for it did not escape his notice that while Captain Spear put his host through a rather close cross-examination, he was not at all communicative on his own affairs.

And neither had Justin lost sight of the mystery of the strange flag, but with something of the old Bedouin sentiment of hospitality, which permits the guest, whoever he may be, to come and go unquestioned, Justin forbore to make inquiries at least for the present. He hoped that the captain himself would soon volunteer information.

In this he was disappointed. The captain ate heartily of the chicken pie and passed from that to the ham and from the ham to the cheese, washing down the whole with abundant draughts of cold brandy, which seemed to take no more effect on him as yet than so much pure water.

At last, when the stranger had eaten enough and was satisfied and Judith had taken out the remnants of the feast and divided them among the men who were sitting grouped outside the grotto door, Justin thought the time had come when, without impropriety, he might question his guest. He began in a delicate, distant, round-about manner on the common ground of politics.

'I need not ask you if you are a native American, Captain Spear. I see that you are.'

'Yes—I am. And yourself? Your name is German, yet you speak English like a native.'

'I am a native American of German descent,' answered Justin.

'A native American are you?—of the the North or the South?' inquired the stranger pointedly.

'Of the South,' replied Justin rather reservedly and feeling that the tables were being turned upon him and that from his questioner he was again becoming the questioned.

'Of the South! So am I. Give me your hand again. We shall be friends, I am sure!' warmly exclaimed the red-bearded captain, seizing the fist of his host and shaking it heartily.

'Thanks,' said Justin wincing somewhat. Then making another effort to enter upon the common ground of politics, he said:

'When I left my native country last October was a year ago, the contest was very bitter between the two great political [illegible]

divided the nation. Which succeeded in electing their candidate?'

'Good Heavens! What a revelling mine of your long separation from the world and your utter ignorance of its affairs your question gives one. I positively shiver only to contemplate your position until this moment! Man, you might as well have been dead and buried in your cave as entombed alive in this desert of an island.'

'I do not think so,' said Justin. 'But tell me who was elected President of the United States?'

'Is it possible that you don't know?'

'How should I? I left the United States in October. When I left there seemed to be an equal chance of success between the candidates; the election did not come off till November.'

'And you don't know what has happened since?'

'No, I tell you.'

'What! did no passing ship bring you the news?'

'If a ship had passed we should not have been found here,' said Justin impatiently.

'Did no bird sing it? No zephyr bear it? No breeze waft it?'

'Birds, waves and breezes are not apt to gossip with me,' said Justin.

'Hear it, Olympian Jove!' Here is a gallant son of the South that does not yet know that he is free! That he has been free for nearly two years! A man that still believes in the supremacy of the stars and stripes and in the existence of the Glorious Union! Ha—ha—ha! ha—ha—ha! Oh! but in respect to the lady's presence, I could shout with laughter! Come—what will you give me for my news?'

'Way, Ireland, if you will not freely impart your news to an exile who has been without any for so long a time, I have nothing to offer you but my thanks,' replied Justin, greatly perplexed by the words and manners of his guest.

'Now that appeals to my better nature! I will tell you all. But stay—I must not tell you all at once. It would overwhelm you.'

'In Heaven's name, what has happened? Have we annexed Canada or Mexico or both?'

'Neither yet—I tell you I must break the matter to you gently. And first by answering your question as to who was elected President of the United States. And I will do it dramatically as well as gradually. Behold, the curtain rises on the grand drama. Act 1st. Scene 1st.—The Election of Abraham Lincoln.'

'Thank Heaven!' said Justin.

'I say so too! We Southerners worked hard for the election of Old Abe; because we knew if he was not elected we could never carry our point with the common people against their superstitious attachment to the Union.'

'What do you mean? I don't understand you.'

'No, perhaps not, for that was one of the deepest designs of state-craft that ever was wrought. The slave-power working covertly for the election of the abolition candidate! Ha—ha—ha! ho—ho—ho!'

'Go on—perhaps I shall know what you would be at presently,' said Justin.

'Perhaps you will. Shift the scene. Scene 2nd.—The Secession of South Carolina!'

'What!' thundered Justin, in astonishment.

'Yes, sir!' replied the captain of the San George, who understood only the intonishment.

'South Carolina seceded!' repeated Justin, now in incredulous amazement.

'Glorious little State! Yes! She alone first flung down the gauntlet of defiance. She, single handed, challenged the whole power of the federal government and inaugurated the storied great War of Independence!'

'What followed?' demanded Justin, in a low voice; while Britomarce, leaning her elbow on the table and bending forward, listened breathlessly to the new words of the stranger. 'Wait and see! Shift the scenes. Scene 3rd.—This is a very exciting scene. Secession of Georgia, followed by the secession of all the Gulf States. Retirement of the Southern Senators from the Senate of the United States.'

'And were they suffered to depart?' inquired Britomarte, in a soft but thrilling voice.

'Of course they were, young lady! What should hinder them?'

'Their agents, I should think.'

'Ha—ha—ha! Ho—ho—ho! Catch Uncle Jemmy at that game! or any of his cabinet either! But let me go on with the play. Scene 4th. A very stately scene this—the Confederate Congress at Montgomery! Organization of a provisional government! Election of Jefferson Davis as President of the Southern Confederacy.'

'No,' exclaimed Justin, starting up in almost uncontrollable agitation.

'Yes, I tell you! Now sit down and be quiet. Don't let your feelings overpower you prematurely. For there are more news and greater scenes to come. I see I was right to break the story to you gradually—or the day dawns. No one can bear the light of

the man if it stirred, as suddenly in the blackness of the night.'

'Go on,' said Justin.

'I'm going on. Scene 6th. A very comic scene this. Executive Mansion. Ambassadors of the Confederacy inviting President Jemmy to withdraw United States troops from Fort Sumter. Emissaries from Major Anderson beseeching President Jemmy to reinforce United States troops at Fort Sumter. President Jemmy standing hesitating between two opinions, like the donkey between two bundles of hay—doesn't know what to do, and does nothing.'

'The man must have been in his dotage!' exclaimed Justin.

'Probably. We didn't object to that. But let us proceed with the play. Scene 6th. A splendid spectacular scene this—embracing the whole drop h. of the stage, the full force of the company, brilliant fireworks, et cetera. In sight—the bombardment of Fort Sumter! The fall of Fort Sumter! Lowering of the Star Spangled Banner. Elevation of the Confederate Flag. Grand Tableau. And the curtain falls upon the first act of the great drama amidst thunders of applause.'

Justin had sprung to his feet, and was standing gazing with starting eyes, distended nostrils and clenched teeth at the speaker.

'What the demon ails you, man? Are you mad? Are you mad?' exclaimed the rebel captain.

'I would return the question! What ails you? Are you mad? Are you drawing imaginary pictures black as the scenes of Dante's Inferno? Are you talking at random? Do you know what you are saying?' demanded Justin, glaring at his guest.

'Yes, I know very well what I am saying. I am saying that we have stormed Fort Sumter! That we have dragged down to the dust the proud Star Spangled Banner that never was humbled before!' said the rebel captain, helping himself to another great bumper of the strong old brandy that was now beginning to affect even his seasoned system, so as to inflame his blood and dim his perceptions.

'Oh! dread God of Battles, where stayed thy thunderbolts?' exclaimed Justin, starting from the table and hurriedly pacing the whole length of the room.

He felt an almost uncontrollable desire to take this man by the throat and hurl him through the door; but he remembered that the man was his own invited guest, and had eat at his board, broken his bread, and drunk his health; he also reflected that only by this means could he get the information which he was so anxious to obtain, and so he restrained his impulse.

Meanwhile Captain Spear destroyed himself with that common delusion which blinded so many secessionists to the sentiments of loyal Southerners, whom they supposed to be fellow secessionists merely because they were fellow-citizens; and his perceptions were still further obscured by the fumes of the brandy he had swallowed, and so he utterly misunderstood the character of Justin Rosenthal, and mistook the cause of his excitement. He believed that the young man, being a native of the South, must be an advocate of Secession, and that his strong emotion was in sympathy with his own high exultation over the victory he had just been describing.

'If you will only sit down and compose yourself, my young friend, I will go on with the play. There are greater stories to come than any I have yet described, I can tell you!' said the rebel captain.

'Yes, go on with the play!' said Justin, throwing himself into his chair, and covering his face from the captain.

'The curtain rises on Act 2nd, Scene 1st. There is another spectacular scene! Again the whole depth of the stage; the full strength of the company; pyrotechnical—dazzling effects! In a word, the Battle of Manassas! The great Federal army under General McDowell—the great Confederate army under General Beauregard. Tremendous engagement! Terrific fighting! Total rout of the Federals! Complete triumph of the Confederates! Grand Tableau!'

Here the captain paused, helped himself to another bumper of the old Cognac, swallowed it at a gulp, closed his eyes, and leaned back in his chair.

'Go on,' said Justin, scarcely able to speak for the strong emotion that nearly choked his voice.

'That's all. I have finished my battle, and I have finished the tale; or, rather, all I have to tell. When the curtain dropped on that scene I left the theatre of war, at least in regard to the military branch of action. In short, I received letters of marque from the Confederate Government, authorizing me to cruise in quest of Federal prizes, and I took the command of the privateer Sea Serpent. I have already taken a few Federal merchant ships; but other more exciting duties engross my attention. Was obliged unfortunately to quit the coast of Virginia, where I have enough to occupy me for the present, and come up here to the mouth of the Potomac.'

'And their unfortunate crew?' groaned Justin.

'It was a pity,' said the drunken captain, sleepily, 'but I had to sink them with their ships! Hadn't men enough to guard them!'

'And now?'

'Now I am cruising about in these latitudes, lying in wait for returning East Indiamen, which are always rich prizes and easy prey, being without guns.'

'And so!' exclaimed Justin, no longer able to restrain himself, but bounding to his feet, and seizing the rebel captain by the throat, and shaking him violently—'and so I have been harbouring no less a miscreant than a licensed pirate, who takes advantage of his letters of marque and makes war—not upon men-of-war, but upon defenceless merchantmen—seing their cargoes, murdering their crews, and scuttling their ships!'

'It was a mil—lil—lilitary necessity, Commodore!' spluttered the wretch, gasping and choking in the vice-like gasp of the furious young athlete.

'Your instant execution is a moral necessity, miscreant!' thundered Justin, shaking him by the throat as though he would have shaken his sinful soul from his brutal body.

'Justin! Justin! forbear! would you murder the villain at your own board!' frantically exclaimed Britomarte, starting up and seizing the arm of the young man. 'Would you murder him before my eyes!'

'I would execute him now and here! for he deserves instant death!' cried the young man, tightening his grasp until the pirate grew black in the face.

'Justin! Justin! spare him! not for his sake, but for your own honour! He is too much intoxicated to defend himself! He is helpless as a child in your grasp! For your own honour, Justin! curb your rage and spare a defenceless man!' pleaded Britomarte, clinging to her lover.

'I will obey you, my queen! I will spare the miscreant, though he does not deserve to be spared, never having spared others!' replied Justin, hurling from him the form of the pirate, who fell heavily, striking his head upon the stone floor.

'Oh, Justin! I fear that he is already dead!' exclaimed Britomarte, approaching the motionless form of the pirate, who, from the united effects of drunkenness, suffocation, and concussion, was now quite insensible.

'He is dead drunk, that is all,' replied Justin, turning the body half over with his foot and then leaving it.

He went to the entrance of the cavern and looked out. The men that had been grouped before the door were nowhere in sight; but Judith was walking about gathering up crusts and bones and other litter left by them on the ground.

Justin beckoned her to approach, and she came.

'What are you doing, Judith?' he inquired, in a low voice.

'Cleaning up the yard afther the saymen, sure. Troth, they're as dirty as pigs as their males, so they are.'

'Where have they gone, Judith?'

'Divil a bit of me knows! They took up the keg of whiskey ye gave them, so they did, and walked off wid it before me two looking eyes. Meself thinks they have carried it down to the boat, and are stealing it off to the ship unbeknownst to the captain! Sure I called to them to stop; but they told me ye gave them the whiskey itself, which I couldn't contradict.'

'I am glad they are gone, Judith; but I suppose they will come back here presently for their captain. Come in here, Judith, a moment; I wish to speak with you,' said Justin, gravely.

Judith came into the grotto, wondering. But when she saw the insensible form of the pirate captain, she exclaimed:

'Lorrd kape us! I thought how it would be! Sure he's afther dhrinking a whole bottle iv that strong old brandy, and has fallen down dead dhrunk, so he has. Sure, sir, where will we drag him away to?'

'Nowhere, Judith! he must remain just where he is until his men return to take him! But draw near and listen to me. This man is not a Confederate officer, nor is his ship a Confederate privateer. Neither would be acknowledged by the Confederate States. The Southern people would not tolerate piracy. This man has taken advantage of civil war to become a pirate. You have heard and read enough to be able to know and dread the lawlessness and cruelty of these pirates——'

'Pirates! Lord betune us and harrm, are they pirates?' exclaimed Judith, opening her mouth and eyes and suspending her breath.

'They are pirates, Judith. Now compose yourself, my good girl. And, dear Britomarte, attend. You must take Judith with you and leave this grotto. You must both go up the mountain to my hole in the rock, which is the safest hiding place on the whole island. You must conceal yourself there until these men have left the island and their ship has sailed. If they

do not see you again they may not think of you. Or even if they do think of you, they will never be able to find you in that secure retreat. Go at once!'

'But you, Justin—but you,' exclaimed Miss Conyers, anxiously.

'I can take care of myself.'

'Oh, how? Oh, how? Think of the fury of that wretch when he recovers his senses, and remembers the punishment you inflicted on him. Think of the vengeance of his crew. What could you, one man, do against the pirate and all his band?'

'Britomarte, you who have no fears for yourself, should have none for me. Only death can come to me. Worse, infinitely worse, might reach you. Go, dear Britomarte. Go at once. These miscreants may be even now on their way here,' he urged.

'Justin, once before I was forced from your side in an hour of deadly peril. I will not be so again,' she replied, looking white, and firm as marble.

'Dear Britomarte, you shall be forced to nothing, but you shall be convinced of the necessity of following my advice. The peril you dread for me is nothing—nothing. That drunken brute whose recovery you dread so much, will not come to his senses for many hours. His men, when they come for him, will have to carry him off in his present state of unconsciousness. And even when he does recover, it is not likely that he will remember anything about the choking he got from me. As to the crew, I have treated them kindly. They will be contented with helping themselves to everything they want, and they will leave me in peace. It is you and Judith only who will be in peril from them—in awful peril, if they see you. Go, Britomarte. Oh, Britomarte, hasten!'

'I cannot bear to leave you alone to meet that desperate band!' she cried.

'Britomarte! I can take care of myself by staying here, but I can only take care of you by concealing you in the cavern. Britomarte, listen. In that horrible Sepoy insurrection in India a few years ago, when the banded fiends invested the Tower of Djel and carried it by storm, the young English officer, commanding the place shot his young bride through the brain, to save her from falling into the hands of those demons! Britomarte, if you do not follow my counsel and conceal yourself in the cavern, that may be the only means left me to save you from worse than death.'

Still she hesitated.

'I would rather fall by your hand than be forced to leave you in an hour of danger,' she said.

'Britomarte, I repeat you shall be forced to do nothing—not even to save yourself; but if you persist in remaining here, you will drive me mad!' he exclaimed.

'I will go then,' she answered, reluctantly.

Not to give her time to think the matter over, he slipped her arm in his, and led her from the grotto, calling to the pame-stricken Irish girl to follow them.

Holding her hand, he helped her to ascend the almost inaccessible height where his 'hole in the rock' was situated.

He put her and her attendant in there; and then he closed the opening with fragments of rock, so loosely put together as not to exclude the air; and then he stuck green brushwood in between them, in such a way as to make it look like growing bushes, and conceal the entrance from the most prying eyes.

Having completed his task, he put his head down among the brushwood and his lips to a small crevice between the fragments of rock, and whispered—

'Good night, dear Britomarte! Trust in Providence and keep up your spirits. As soon as the pirate ship has sailed, I will come and release you, and all will be well.'

CHAPTER XXXVII.

AT BAY.

Rocks have been shaken from their solid base;
But what shall move a firm and dauntless mind?
The brave man is not he who feels no fear,
For that were stupid and irrational;
But he whose noble soul its fear subdues,
And bravely dares the danger Nature shrinks from.—*Joanna Baillie.*

Justin returned to the grotto and buried himself with putting out of sight all Britomarte's and Judith's little personal effects that might have tempted the cupidity of the pirates or reminded them of the presence of women [illegible] island.

Ha[illegible] this, he went to one of the caverns [illegible] the stores taken from the ship were [illegible] and he selected from them tobacco, pipes, whiskey, great boats, sticks, guns, pistols, swords, sabres, a little of everything, in [illegible] that looked like a man's peculiar property, and suggested only the presence of man, and he brought them into the grotto and scattered them about in careless disorder.

They turned down to rest and to wait for what should come next.

With rest came the opportunity of reflection, for up to this moment he had acted from impulse only. But now in the midst of his clear sense of the danger that threatened not only himself, but her who was dearer to him than his own life—he thought with keen anguish of his beloved native country, plunged in all the horrors of civil war and menaced with destruction. And, oh! the intolerable longing that filled his soul to get back to her, to fight for her, and, if need were, to die for her. But this could not be, he knew. The ship that he had hoped would have borne him and his companions back to their homes, was now discovered to be a pirate, sailing under the false colours, and making prey of unarmed merchantmen. He and his party, if they should escape death from the crew, must remain on this lone island, waiting the improbable event of another vessel's arrival to take them off. But even in his deepest distress Justin did not despair; his trust in Divine Providence was too strong to permit him so to do.

While thus reflecting, he suddenly became conscious of the approach of the pirate crew.

He rose to his feet, and standing over the unconscious form of the drunken captain, waited to receive them.

They reached the front of the grotto, but they did not come in immediately; they stood about in groups and seemed to be talking a moment, until at length one of their number advanced to the door of the grotto and touched his hat.

'Well, my man, what is wanted?' inquired Justin, assuming a calmness he was far from feeling; and yet his disturbance was not upon his own account, but solely upon Brittonarte's.

'If your pleasure, sir, we wanted to tell the captain what the tide serves,' replied the man, civilly enough.

Justin pointed at the insensible form at his feet, just-even before he had done so, the man's eye had fallen upon it, and the man's disgust broke out in an oath.

'By ——!' There he is again as drunk as ——. How so?

'If you managing to make sail, my man, you and your mates will have to take your captain up and carry him off in his present state,' said Justin, speaking with a forced quietness.

'We all thought the fellow would never himself to behave himself. And a precious good opportunity to get rid of him; and a glorious riddance it would be, too!' said the man, stooping over and staring at the fallen captain.

'You would not, surely, abandon your chief in his present helpless state of unconsciousness?' remonstrated Justin, who had no desire to receive the pirate permanently.

'Oh, wouldn't we though? I don't know why we came back for him at all. That I don't! If anybody had started the proposition to sail without him, I'm sure we would have done it. If we leave him here, it will save his life, and save us the trouble of cutting his throat, which we should be sure to do before long,' said the man, coolly, as with his hands on his knees, he stooped low and stared intently into the stupid face of the captain.

'Is he so very unpopular on his ship, then?' inquired Justin, as with difficulty he repressed the disgust and horror awakened by the man's words and manner.

'Unpopular! Why, shiver my timbers, never ever known in a fight or a storm [illegible] he hasn't got on drunk as Julius [illegible] and left the ordering of the fight, or [illegible] thing of the ship, to Mate Mulligan. A [illegible] ful igus we want for our captain. And Mulligan we mean to have!' said the man, suddenly turning and leaving the unconscious captain and going out to his companions, to whom he began to talk in a low and earnest voice.

Justin did not attempt to follow or to interfere with him. Upon reflection he was glad that a subject so full of interest and excitement as the deposition and desertion of their captain by his crew, should have arisen to engage their thoughts and prevent them from remembering the existence of the women on the island.

He watched the men who were haranguing his mates outside; he saw how, with eager eyes and fierce gesticulations, they crowded around him; and so he was not surprised when the speaker at length left his companions, and returned to the grotto door and touched his hat and said—

'Master, the boys mean to leave the lubber here, and elect Mate Mulligan captain and me first mate. But, master, we will take you off, as you have done the handsome by us in the matter of the keg of whiskey; if you don't mind cruising round a bit with the continuity of a fight now and then, and the chance of some day or other getting into port somewhere.'

'Thank you; but I am detained here for the present, and do not wish to leave just yet,' said Justin.

'Just as you please, master. Have you got any more of that good liquor left?'

'Yes; here it is, help yourselves, you are

quite welcome to the whiskey, tobacco, pipes, or anything else you may see here in my Robinson Crusoe establishment,' said Justin.

'Now that is what I call handsome. Here, mates, lend a hand and help to carry some of this liquor and 'bacco to the boats!' said the man, once more going to the door and calling to his companions.

They all came in at his summons.

Justin noticed that the man whom Captain Spear had called Mulligan was not among them. And thus he knew that Mulligan had no part in the mutiny, and had been elected captain of the pirate ship, in his absence, without his knowledge, and possibly against his will.

The men touched their hats, civilly, to their host, and then began to take up the articles pointed out, and to carry them off.

'Good-bye, mamen. Sorry to leave so kind a host. Call again when we pass this way. Meantime, wish you joy of the new comrade we have left you,' said the ringleader of the mutiny, as with a bottle of whiskey in each of his pockets and one in each of his hands, he followed the last sailor from the grotto.

Justin went to the door and watched them out of sight; and then he took his telescope and climbed the mountain to the table land on the summit, and watched them as they entered their boat and rowed towards the ship.

With the aid of his glass he saw them embark, unload their boat and draw it up and secure it to the davits; and still he watched them while they got up their anchor, spread their canvas to the breeze, and made sail, and still farther, he watched until the ship had sailed away from the island and waned in the distance.

Then he hurried down the mountain side and into the grotto to look after the pirate captain, his late guest, who was henceforth to be his prisoner.

He found Captain Spear still in the heavy sleep of intoxication.

He left him and went to one of the caverns, where articles rescued from the wreck were kept, and looked up a set of fetters, consisting of handcuffs and anklets, such as are often kept on board East Indiamen for the restraint of a possible mutineer or a criminal. He had brought them off the wreck, not with the most distant idea that he should ever be obliged to put them to legitimate use, but for the same reason that he saved every portable piece of iron that he could find—namely, because he knew that it would be valuable on their desert island, where they might remain for years, or for [illegible] supplies from without [illegible]

Hav[illegible] he returned to the grotto [illegible] them up[illegible] anklet of the sleeping p[illegible]

Ah! H[illegible] that was noblest in the nature of [illegible] revolted at the work of [illegible] a sleeping man, his sometime guest—robber and murderer, though this one was.

Had Justin had only himself and his own safety to think of, he would have given the creature—quiescent though he was—the free use of his limbs and the run of the island; but he had Britomarte and her welfare to consider. Had he been able always to keep Britomarte in his sight, he might still have refrained from the repulsive duty of binding the sleeping man. Had Britomarte been his wife, he might have guarded her by night as well as by day; but she was not so, and her apartment was sacred, even from the approach of her guardian angel, when that guardian angel took the form of a man, so there was no other way of surely protecting her from this villain, than to kill him where he lay, or to bind him in his sleep. Justin took the most merciful alternative, and securely fettered him, and then dragged him, still sleeping, to the nearest cavern in the mountain which was henceforth to be his dwelling. Daylight was waning, and so he hastened to climb the mountain side to that eagle's eyrie, that high-placed hole in the rock where he had hidden Britomarte and Judith.

When he reached the spot, he stopped, put aside the brush-wood with his two hands, and placed his lips to the crevice of the rocks and said:

'I am here, Britomarte.'

'Oh, Justin, thank Heaven!' she answered.

He tore away the brushwood and rolled away the fragments of rock with which he had closed the opening, and he entered the hole. Little more than a hole it was indeed, for he could scarcely stand upright within it.

Britomarte had risen to meet him, and now she extended both hands, eagerly repeating:

'Oh, Justin, thank Heaven—thank Heaven that you are safe.'

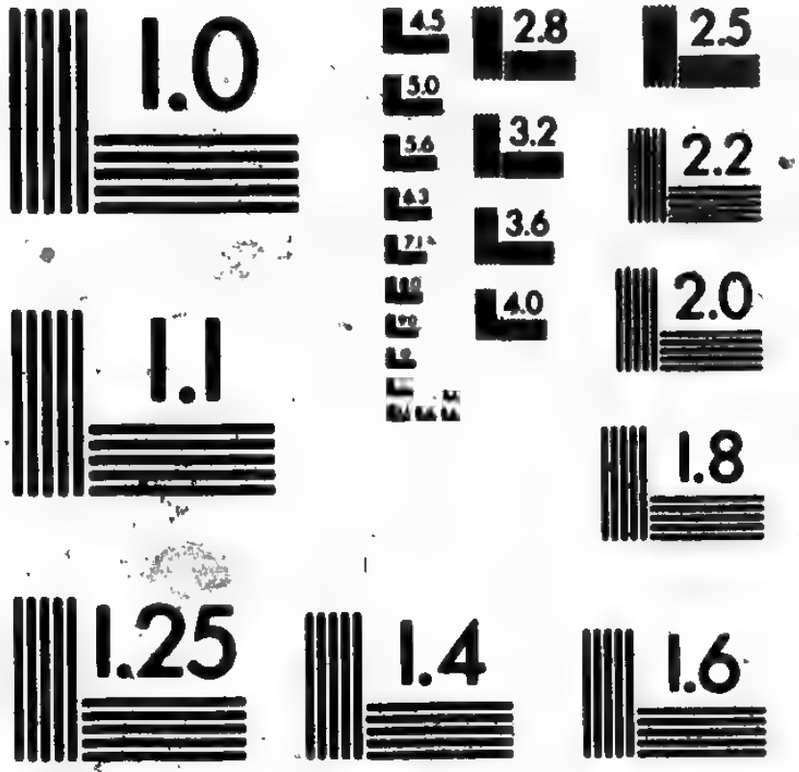
'I was never in danger, dearest.'

'Oh, Justin, if that man had recovered his consciousness and denounced you to his crew, and they had set upon you, what could you have done against his whole band!'

'"If"—yes, "if"—my dearest. Where

MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART

(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No. 2)



APPLIED IMAGE Inc

1653 East Main Street
Rochester, New York 14609 USA
(716) 482 – 0300 – Phone
(716) 288 – 5989 – Fax

shall we stop if we begin to build upon the "ifs" of the past? The "ifs" of the future are sufficiently embarrassing. None of these things have happened as you feared, dear Britomarte.'

'They are gone. Their ship has sailed, then. I suppose so, or you would not be here.'

'Yes, they are gone, and their ship has sailed; but they have left us a remembrance with a vengeance, Britomarte.'

'Eh?'

'They have abandoned their captain and left him on the island.'

'What?'

'Yes, it is true. They took advantage of his intoxicated condition to get rid of a chief of whom they were already tired.'

'And they have left that brute with us?'

'Yes, Britomarte; but don't let that circumstance trouble you.'

'Oh, Justin, Justin, what a misfortune.'

'It is not a blessing my dearest sister; not even a blessing in disguise, as far as I can see.'

'He deserves death, and yet we must not kill him. He is not fit to live, and yet we must let him. He is not to be trusted, and yet—'

'He is not to be trusted, and so I have pinioned and penned him. He is secured from committing any more crimes for the present.'

'Justin, sit down and tell me all about it before we leave this place,' said Britomarte sinking down upon the stone floor, and placing her hand upon her breast as though to still the throbbing of her heart. She was thoroughly unnerved, and he saw it and obeyed her. He told her in detail all that had happened. He ended by saying:

'There was something repugnant to me in the idea of binding a stupefied man, but I was constrained to do it, for unless I could have been with you both day and night, to guard you both waking and sleeping, it was necessary either to bind or to kill the miscreant let loose upon us, so I bound him.'

'And so it hurt yer conscience, did it?' Lorrd bless yer. Pity you ain't sheriff iv some place, so all the thaves and cut-throats could go fray!' said Judith, for the first time breaking silence.

Justin smiled indulgently, and Britomarte arose, and the three left the grotto and began to descend the mountain side.

The sun had long been down; the short twilight was over, and it would have been quite dark but for the clear purple-black sky and splendid starlight of those latitudes.

When they reached and entered Britomarte's grotto, Justin lighted the lamp, and Judith lifted up her hands in horror at the scene of confusion it revealed.

'Lord betwane us and harum! What iver have ye been doing to the place at all, to turn it into such a den iv thaives? Sure, are yez afther hoolding a wake, or a Donnybrook fair in it? Or is it a war dance itself, like the red Indians, you're afther dancing? Glory be to Moses! did iver a Christian sowl see the likes iv it? Look at the boots! look at the braces! look at the ould coats, and the impty bottles, and the broken pipes, and—and—Lord kape us! the war dance must have inded in a fray fight!'

As Miss Conyers looked the amazement that she forebore to express, Justin began to explain:

'I put out of sight all your pretty, graceful, womanish trifles, and I brought all this masculine rubbish here to make the place look like a bachelor's den, and prevent the pirate crew, if possible, from remembering the existence of women on the island. This precaution, followed by the interesting question of abandoning their captain, did really prevent the men from thinking of you.'

'Oh, Justin, how much we have to thank you for, my brother. First, for saving and sustaining our lives, and now for protecting and defending us.'

'Hush, Britomarte. Your words wound me,' said Justin in a low voice, as he began to gather up the boots, braces, bottles, and other 'masculine rubbish' of which he had spoken, to carry it away.

Judith also lent a hand, grumbling all the while.

'Sure and the more I see iv men, the more like sinseless pigs I think they be! For it's a pig-pen itself they've turned the place into!'

'You forgot, Judith, that it was a man who made this place habitable for us,' said Miss Conyers.

'Thrue for ye, ma'am, let alone bringing me me warrm tay itself. And sure I'm not thankless only it would thry the timper iv a hooly saint to see the place turned up side down this a way.'

'It was done for our safety, Judith.'

'Sure I'm not denying it, ma'am. But faix it would vex a blissed angel, so it would, to see what a bear's nest they've made iv it,' said Judith, as, with arms full of rubbish, she strode out of the grotto.

When the place was restored to order, Britomarte set the table, while Judith went into the 'kitchen' to make the fire and boil the water.

When tea was ready, they all three sat

down in peace and in thankfulness to partake of it, for Britomarte insisted that upon this evening, and from this evening, their faithful friend Judith should join them.

'Sure I'll do it once in a way to plaise yez, but faix, for the most part, I'd a heap lucifer take me tay in pace be the kitchen fire, so I would,' said the Irish girl, as she condescended to accept Miss Conyers' invitation.

When the quiet tea was over, Judith cleared away the service and washed the dishes, while Britomarte replaced the woollen cover and the lamp upon the table, and Justin got down the Bible and opened it.

And when Judith returned, they all three gathered around the table, and Justin read a chapter in the New Testament, and Britomarte sang the appropriate hymn—

'When dangers, woes and death are nigh,
Past mercies teach us where to fly.'

Then all knelt and offered up their evening prayers, remembering to return especial thanks for their preservation from the perils of the past day.

When Justin bade them good-night, he took with him a blanket and a pillow, which he carried to the hole where the pirate captain was penned. He found the man still in the heavy stupor of intoxication, which had now lasted four hours. He lifted his head and put a pillow under it, and covered him over with the blanket and left him.

And so the day that began in peril ended in peace.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE CAGED TIGER.

Oh! that my tongue were in the thunder's mouth,
Then with a passion would I shake the world.—*Shakespeare.*

Anger's my meat: I sup upon myself,
And so shall starve with feeding.—*Ibid.*

'Ahoy-oy-oy!'

Such was the stentorian shout that startled Britomarte out of her morning nap in the bed place of the grotto, nearly stunned Judith in the midst of her morning work in the kitchen, and even reached Justin through his dreams in his eyrie.

'Ahoy-oy-oy!' It came again, awakening all the mountain echoes.

Britomarte, finding sleep impossible, arose and began to make her toilet.

Judith stopped in the midst of her bread making, and listened.

Justin, to whom the shout came, softened by distance, slept on, and dreamed of the bombardment of Richmond.

'Ahoy-oy-oy!' It arose again, cleaving the empyrean.

Britomarte knew that it was the shout of the fettered pirate captain, recovered from his drunken stupor.

Judith also guessed the origin of the horrid noise, and took her hands out of the dough she was kneading, and guided by the sounds, went to see what was the matter with the prisoner. Justin, at length thoroughly aroused, got up and dressed himself.

'Ahoy! Mulligan, Diets, Lecompte, Jobson. In the name of all the fiends in flames, what's all this? Where the demon am I? And where are you all? Ahoy! Jobson, Lecompte, Diets, Mulligan. Ahoy-oy-oy!' shouted the captain.

'Ah, thin, will ye be aisy? Will ye lave off yowling till ye wake the young misthress up, itself? Troth it's small use, so it is, for ye to be screeching for yer Frinchmin and Dutchmin and Englishmin, and all the lave iv yer cut-throat crew, which meself believes to be made up iv the offscourings iv all the nations on the face iv the earth!' exclaimed Judith, as she hurried on towards the place of confinement of the captive.

'Ahoy-oy-oy! Mulligan! Jobson! Set fire to you, where are you all? And what in fury place is this! Deits! Lecompte! Ahoy-oy-oy!' shouted the unwearied lungs of the pirate.

'Bad luck to ye for a yowling cur, will ye lave off making a noise to wake the young misthress, or will I bring a red hot poker to ram it down yer throat? Bedad I'd rather do that same than not, any day!' said Judith, as she rolled away the stone, and let in the light of day and the sight of her own face upon the captive pirate.

The man had got up and thrown off his blanket, and was now wrenching away at his fetters, to try to free himself.

'Ah, my angel with the red rose cheeks, is it you? Come in and kiss me, then and tell me what the fiend has happened to me?' he said, looking up and recognising Judith.

'Troth, thin, I'll kiss ye with the flat iv a red hot shovel slapped in yer mouth, if ye don't lave off yer nonsense. What has happened to ye, is it? Faix, can't ye see? Sure it's dead ye are entirely, and gone to the bad place. Ye died in dhrink and in mortal sin, so ye did and ye was sent here to wait until Ould Nick had time to attend to yer case. Meself think he's baiting up one iv his hottest furnaces for yer sake, and it

takes so long to hate it hot enough, which is the reason ye are kept waiting,' said Judith, setting up her arms akimbo and putting her head on one side and contemplating the captive pirate with great satisfaction.

'What the fury rubbish you are talking? And what the demon is the meaning of all this? And where are the others?' growled the pirate, now scowling upon the girl he had smiled upon but a few minutes ago.

'Maning who be the others? Ould Nick's attindant divils? Sure they're helping him to haite up yer furnace,' answered Judith.

'Where are my crew, you infernal——'

'Kape a civil tongue in yer head, will ye, before I bring the hot poker till ye. Sure I'm not iv your infernals. I'm only on a visit of charity to ye.'

'Where are my crew, I ask you?' shouted the captain.

'Sure I'm not daife, that ye need raise your voice so high. And be the same token, ye had batther save yer wind for howling whin ye get into that same furnace, which is to be yer porridge!'

'Will you tell me where my crew is and be blamed to you?'

'Divil a bit of me knows. Ould Nick hasn't got thim yet. They're some'ers on the high says, cutting throats and burning ships.'

'How came I here?'

'The way I tolled ye. By getting dead dhrunk.'

'Who dared to put these fetters on me? By all the fiends in Tartarus, whoever did shall pay for it by a death of torture,' stormed the pirate, wrenching and tearing away at the fetters until he grew black in the face; but only succeeded in bruising his own flesh. 'Yes, they shall pay—they shall pay for it by a death of lingering torments.'

'Suppose ye jist fray yerself before ye boast so big. Sure ye mustn't only catch yer man b fore ye kill him, but faix ye must have the fray use iv yer legs to run after him before ye catch him,' mocked Judith.

'Where is your master, woman?'

'Me masther. Bad luck to ye for an uncivil brute, do ye take me for a nagur?'

'Didn't you mention your mistress just now, you lunatic.'

'Lorrd help ye, ior an ignorant haythen, I mentioned the young misthress iv the place; but she's no mistress iv mine.'

'Where is the master of the place, then, I ask you?'

'Oh, the masther iv this place is Ould Nick. Sure yer not forgetting that ye'r in the bad place, waiting for yer seven times heated furnace, are ye?'

The pirate captain made a gesture of fury.

'Where is the gentleman who entertained me at luncheon yesterday?' he demanded.

'Oh, sure he's alive up there where ye left him,' answered Judith, composedly.

As Judith spoke Justin himself entered the cavern.

'Oh, you are there, are you, sir,' exclaimed the pirate captain, on seeing his host. 'How comes it that I wake and find myself in fetters here?'

'Have you no memory of what happened yesterday?' inquired Justin, coldly.

'I remember landing on this island; and lunching with you; and drinking a good deal of brandy. I suppose I drank a drop too much!' replied the captain.

'I suppose you did!—Judith, my good girl, you may return to your duties,' said Justin.

'Sure, sir, if he gets obstropolous, itself, can ye manage him alone widout the help iv meself?'

'Judith, I'm ashamed of you! a man in fetters. Go, my good girl.'

'Sure, it's all the same to meself, but it's a divil in fetters and not a man you'll find him, so you will,' said Judith, as she left the cavern.

'Oh, then!' exclaimed the pirate captain, when he found himself alone with his host. 'Now then—how came these fetters upon my limbs?'

'Did not the girl tell you?'

'The girl? She's a lunatic from Bedlam. She is a devil from Tartarus. She did nothing but stand there and gibe and mock. Flames and Furies, sir! why don't you answer me?' fiercely exclaimed the captain, suddenly breaking out into a frenzy of impotent rage, as he tore and wrenched at the irons that confined his wrists. 'Where are my fellows?' he thundered.

'They have abandoned you and sailed,' coolly answered Justin.

The pirate dropped his fettered hands and stared at the speaker in incredulous amazement and consternation.

'They took advantage of your state of insensibility and determined to abandon you. A man named Jobson, I think——'

—'My second officer, Satan burn him.'

—'Was the ringleader of the mutineers, who chose another captain, one Mulligan——'

—'My first officer, set fire to him——'

—'And so they left you in a state of unconsciousness and sailed under the command of their new chief.'

'I see it all! dastardly, self-seeking

devils!' groaned the deposed chief, in a frenzy of rage and mortification.

'Easy—easy. Curb your noble indignation and reflect a moment. Who set these men the example?' coolly inquired Justin.

The captain glared at the speaker for a few minutes and then burst out into the most terrific volley of oaths and imprecations, profanities and obscenities, that ever were heard even from the throat of a pirate.

Justin recoiled in horror and disgust, as from a blast of the Inferno.

In the midst of a torrent of maledictions, the prisoner demanded:

'What do you know about me that you are so free with the use of your tongue?'

'I know all about you and your cut-throat crew, thanks to your free use of your tongue after your free use of the bottle,' quietly answered Justin.

'Oh, aye, aye. Fire and brimstone, who put these fetters on me? Did my mutinous crew, or did—did——'

'I put them on you,' said Justin.

'You did. And you expect to live. By—' And here followed another volley of oaths, curses, profanities and indecencies more horrible and revolting than the first, if that were possible; ending with the question: 'How dared you put them on me?'

'Because I thought proper to do so,' replied Justin.

Another blast of maledictions, and then the fierce order:

'Take them off instantly,—instantly, I say,—or it will be worse for you.'

'Come, come, man. You only exhaust yourself to no purpose by all this senseless storming? You are in my power, where I mean to keep you. Yet, pirate, throat-cutter and ship-burner, as you have shamelessly boasted yourself to be, I will treat you as humanely as may be consistent with your safe custody and the welfare of others. You must remain in fetters, for you are no more to be trusted at large in a lone island like this, where there is no law or force to restrain or punish you, and where there are helpless women living alone in their grotto—than a panther is to be turned loose in a garden of little children. So you must remain in fetters. In other respects, you shall be treated more kindly than you deserve. You will not be confined strictly to this cavern. During the night only will you be shut in. During the day you can have the freedom of the island. You will not be able to run or leap, or even walk fast in your fetters, nor would it be safe to allow you to do so; but you can creep about and enjoy the sunlight and the fresh air. Your meals shall be furnished from our table; and your food and drink shall be as good as our own. There is a little trickling fountain out there, beside the cavern, where you can drink or wash your face; and here is a towel and piece of soap. I will leave you to reflect upon all that I have said. And presently I will send you some breakfast,' said Justin, rising and leaving the cavern.

The pirate captain, who had listened impatiently to this long harangue, now burst out into profanity again, and sent after his departing captor a final volley of imprecations.

Justin went calmly on his way to Britomarte's grotto, where he found all things in beautiful order, and Britomarte and breakfast awaiting him.

'Good morning, dearest sister. I fear our grim prisoner disturbed you with his shouting, this morning,' he said.

'He awoke me; but as it was time to rise, I did not mind being awakened,' Miss Conyers replied.

'Bedad! it was worse nor the laughing baste itself! Sure I had to threaten him wid a red-hot poker down his throat, before he'd lave off, so I had,' said Judith, as she brought in the coffee-pot, and set it on the table.

And they sat down to breakfast.

Before Justin and Britomarte helped themselves or each other, they prepared together the breakfast for the prisoner.

Justin piled a large plate with broiled birds and fresh rolls and butter, and Britomarte filled a large bowl with coffee. All this was set upon a tray and given to Judith to take to the captive.

'Faix, it's with no good will I take it, at all, at all,' grumbled the Irish girl.

'Judith, if the man were Satan himself, he is a prisoner and must be treated humanely,' said Miss Conyers.

'Divil a bit iv me will treat Satan humanely, prisoner or no prisoner, because sure it's against scripture and catechism,' retorted Judith, marching off.

She reached the cavern, where the pirate captain still remained seated on the stone floor and scowling darkly.

'Here's your breakfast. You may take it or lave it,' said Judith, setting the tray down and putting her hands akimbo.

The pirate chose neither to take it nor lave it. Swearing awfully, he got up as well as he could, and kicked over the bowl of coffee and the plate of broiled birds and bread and sent them rolling about.

'Oct, divil burn ye for a nasty baste! look what a mess ye've made. Who do ye

think is a gwine to cline up afther ye? Bedad, if I was the masther himself, I'd make ye go down on yer bare knees and lick it all up, so I would,' exclaimed Judith indignantly, as she picked up the empty bowl, plate and tray.

The pirate answered with a blast of maledictions that sent even Judith flying out of the cavern.

She went back to the grotto and reported what had happened.

'And sure the divil's daddy that he is, instead iv thanking me for the good breakfast I brought him, and instead of ateing it like a good Christian as he ought, he flung himself into a savage rage, and kicked over the coffee, and scattered the mate and bread fore and aft about the cavern, and cussed and swore at me till he rised the hair on me head and drav me out iv the cavern, so he did,' she exclaimed, breathlessly.

'You say that he has scattered the meat and bread over the cavern floor. Well, Judith, let it lie there until he comes to his senses or his stomach. Hunger, the great civiliser, will certainly subdue this savage,' said Justin as he arose from the table.

At dinner time, when the Irish woman carried a plate of food to the prisoner, she found the scattered victuals still upon the floor.

'And sure it looks more like a pig-stye than a man's cell, so it does! Here's your dinner. You can take it or leave it, or kick it about. But you can't say that I don't bring you yer males rigular,' said Judith, as she set down the plate and left the cavern.

But at supper time, when she carried him a bowl of tea and a plate of muffins, she found that he had not only eaten up the whole of his dinner, but also every scrap of his neglected breakfast, so that there was not a crumb of bread or scarcely a small bone of bird left.

'Troth, I thought yer appetite would improve with kaping. Now here's some beautiful tay and muffins, just what the young masther and misthress have on their own table. And too good be far for the likes iv you. And maybe ye'll ate it all for spite when I tell ye how it goes agin me cowl to let yer have it,' said Judith.

He snatched the tray out of her hands and hurled a malediction at her head.

'Faix, it's a good thing ye can't get the tray use iv yer limbs, or ye'd throttle me entirely out iv gratitude, ver so thankful, so ye are!' said Judith, as she left the cavern.

After this the prisoner's ferocity sank into sullenness; but he no longer refused his meals, which were served to him by Judith with conscientious regularity.

In the course of a few days he came sullenly out of his cavern and crept about through the groves and by the streams, or along the seashore of the beautiful island. He had a limited use of his fettered limbs—enough to help himself in all absolute personal needs; for instance, he could walk slowly, wash his face, or feed himself; but he could not inflict the slightest injury upon either of the women, if he happened to meet them together or singly in his rambles about the island.

Whenever he met Judith, she mocked him.

When he met Miss Conyers, she returned his greeting kindly. If the arch enemy of God and man had been their prisoner, she could not have treated him unkindly.

Justin always used him humanely, and encouraged his companions in exile to do likewise.

'The man has forfeited his life by every law of every civilized land; but we are not warranted to become his executioners. We have only to deprive him of the power of committing more crime, and then to treat him with Christian charity,' he argued.

Justin Rosenthal was just now a very busy man. In the two years that he and his friends had spent upon the island, he had made what progress was possible in 'making the wilderness to bloom and blossom as the rose.'

The first few months had been spent, as I told you, in the stupendous labour of getting the stores, the animals, and the furniture from the wreck, over the long, rugged, almost impassable, reef of rocks to the island.

By the time that nearly incredible work had been successfully accomplished, the rainy season, the winter of these latitudes, had set in, and all further out-door work was suspended for several months.

When spring and sunshine had come again, it was necessary, first of all, to build fences, to guard the fields and gardens that were to be cultivated from the intrusion of the cattle and poultry, then to till the ground and plant the seeds, of which he had found a great variety in the stores of the missionaries—consisting of wheat, rye and Indian corn, among the field grains, and beans, peas, potatoes, turnips, cabbage, lettuce, and so forth, among the garden seeds.

Of course the planting of all these seeds, many of which were indigenous to the north temperate zone only, was a questionable experiment, to be tried.

All this—fence-building, soil-tilling, seed-planting and cultivating—was a long labour for one pair of hands, and it occupied the whole spring and half the summer.

But the labour was crowned with all the prosperity that could be hoped. At least half the garden seeds produced good crops of table-vegetables. Among the grains the wheat did very well, the Indian corn still better, but the cotton was the greatest success of all. Justin had travelled all over the cotton growing States of his native country, but never had he seen such great white pods of such rich, fine fibre anywhere.

The early autumn months were occupied in harvesting these crops.

In this work Britomarte and Judith were able to help Justin. While Justin cut the wheat, Britomarte picked the great pods of cotton from their stalks, and housed them in the grotto, and Judith pulled the ripe ears of Indian corn, and stored them in her kitchen.

The end of this work had brought the beginning of their second winter on the island, and again all out-door labour was suspended.

Those wintry days and evenings were spent very profitably.

Judith and Britomarte picked the cotton, separating the seed from the wool with their fingers.

Justin, who possessed great mechanical ingenuity, constructed a wheel for Judith. A pair of cards had been found among the stores of the wreck.

Judith carded and spun the cotton wool into fine yarn, and Britomarte knit it into hose for her two friends and herself.

Justin also began to try to construct a loom for weaving; but as the task was a difficult one to a man not brought up to the trade, he had many failures before he had any prospect of success.

Thus had passed the second winter of their sojourn upon the island. It was near the end of the second summers that the pirate ship had anchored near this island, and the captain, by a strange turn of fate, had become their prisoner.

And now Justin was very busy getting in his second summer's crops, and building up his long delayed dwelling houses.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

BRITOMARTE'S NEW HOUSE.

It was a lodge of ample size,
But strange of structure and device,
Of such materials as around
The builder's hand had readiest found.

—*Scott.*

Before the end of the autumn Britomarte's house was completed. A rough house it was indeed, not at all like those of the north temperate zone, yet possessed of some advantages peculiar to itself.

Its architect was limited in the matter of hand tools and of building materials, for the first he had to depend upon the carpenter's box rescued from the wreck, and for the second upon the cocoa-palm tree and the mountain rocks.

Its site was selected in front of the cocoa-palm grove, facing the sea, and looking westward toward their native hemisphere.

Its plan was simple enough and had first been drawn by Justin upon paper. It was a low, square, spacious house, all of one storey, to keep it safe from destruction by the tornadoes that sometimes visited the Island.

It contained four large rooms, separated by two long passages that ran, one from front to back, and the other from end to end, crossing each other at right angles in the centre of the house, so that each room was completely divided from the others. It had four doors, one at each extremity of the two passages. The rooms had each two windows in the outer walls, and two doors opening into the passages.

The walls were built of the long, straight, smooth trunks of the cocoa-palm tree, which in the absence of a saw mill, formed the very best substitutes for planks. The roof was made of transverse poles cut from the trunks of very young trees and covered with the broad, strong, feathery palm leaves laid one over another in rows, and kept down by other transverse poles securely fastened. The rustic roof afforded a complete protection against the rain and wind.

The kitchen chimney was built of fragments of rock joined with a strong cement, made by mixing the sap of the cocoa tree with lime burned by Justin from the shells and bones collected on the island.

There was no floor, except the ground, which was levelled and beaten hard. The walls inside were made smooth by a rude plastering of moistened soil packed in between the logs. And then both floors and walls were covered with the cement that gave them the appearance of cream-coloured stone.

THE PROPERTY OF THE ATHENÆUM CLUB. NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THE READING ROOM

I said the house fronted west. The windows of the two front rooms only were glazed with glass, taken from the sashes in the cabin of the wreck. They had also shutters. The two back rooms had shutters only.

The north-western front room was the family parlour. It was neatly fitted up with the furniture rescued from the saloon of the wreck. It had a red carpet on the floor; red curtains at the windows, a centre table and a lamp, a side table and book-shelves, a sofa, a rocking-chair, and four common chairs, and lighter articles too numerous and trivial to mention.

The south-western front room was Britomarte's bed-chamber, which was also shared by Judith. It was daintily fitted up with furniture saved from the ladies' cabin and berths of the wreck. It had a neat carpet on the floor, white curtains at the windows, and two little white beds, in opposite corners. It had also a chest of drawers surmounted by a looking-glass, flanked by a work-box and a dressing-case, a wash-stand provided with a white china basin, ewer and soap dish, only a little the worse for being knocked about in the wreck, a low chair, a footstool, a little candle-stand and other small conveniences.

The south-eastern back room was the family kitchen, accommodated with the cooking stove and other necessary articles from the caboose of the wreck.

The south-western back room was Justin's sleeping apartment. It was fitted up with severe simplicity. The windows were not even glazed, but were only provided with rough wooden shutters, the hard floor was bare, the bed was a narrow mattress laid upon a rude bedstead, the washstand was a broad wooden shelf, with a tin basin and a stone pitcher, the chair was a three-legged stool, and the wardrobe a few strong pegs driven into the walls, upon which he hung his clothes. All these primitive articles of furniture were of his own manufacture, from fragments of the wreck.

Could Britomarte have gained her will in this respect as well as in most others, there would have been a more equal division of the rescued furniture, and Justin's room would have been made more comfortable. But in this one thing Justin was firm—in insisting upon his right to devote himself to her service and deny himself for her sake.

There was no more furniture, he said, than sufficed to make Britomarte's chamber and parlour comfortable and pretty, and he would not take so much as a chair or a stand from either. Besides, he rather liked his Spartan room; its severe simplicity was wholesome and strengthening to mind and body.

This rude sea-side dwelling place was fenced in by a low wall made by driving short stakes, cut from the cocoa-tree, closely together into the ground after the manner of a stockade; and two rude gates, one front and one back, gave entrance and exit to the premises.

At the back of the yard there was a small store-house, or pantry, built to keep a limited supply of provisions—the great bulk of their provisions being still kept in the mountain grottoes, where they could best be preserved.

A few tropical vines had been transplanted from the thicket at the base of the mountain to the soil in front of the house, and had readily taken root, and were now trained up to festoon and shade the windows and doors.

At the end of the first autumn month all was ready.

It was on a certain Wednesday afternoon that our friends first took possession of their new home.

Justin, having seen the women established, went to his out-door work, which was just now the transplanting of some young fruit trees that he had raised in a nursery from the seeds, and that now needed to be set out.

Britomarte took her needle-work—some shirts that she was neatly repairing for Justin—and seated herself beside the front window of her bed-chamber, looking out to the western sea, and across the sea towards her own native land.

It was a novelty and a delight—perhaps the greatest novelty and the greatest delight of the whole change—to be able to sit sewing at an open window, and looking out upon the land, sea and sky.

Heretofore, since she had been on the island, she had not been able to do so.

Her grotto had been a beautiful place—a wood-nymph's bower—a fairy queen's palace; but it had no windows, and its lofty skylight, though it illuminated the whole place, afforded no out-look whatever, and gave but a limited glimpse of the sky. When she had sat there and sewed, her vision had been bounded by the walls of solid rock, which had given a prison aspect to her dwelling place.

Now all this was changed.

She sat sewing at a cheerful, open, white-curtained window, letting her eyes rove, whenever she raised her head, freely over land and sea and sky, with a buoyant sense

of liberty and—a touching sense of gratitude also!

Who was it that had changed her life so happily? Nay, who had saved, sustained and blessed her life, ever since she had been cast, a helpless creature, on this Desert Island?

Justin Rosenthal, a man—one of the common enemy—one of the hated sex—one of the despots, the oppressors and despoilers of woman!

In vain the man-hater repeated to herself that Justin Rosenthal was an exceptional man, by whom his whole sex could not be judged.

For again the truth forced itself upon her perceptions:—What Justin had done, suffered and sacrificed for her, man had done, suffered and sacrificed for woman all over the civilised world. Woman was the darling, the queen and the idol of man. For her, he had subdued and cultivated and adorned the earth. Of the stupendous collective labour of the world, woman was the chief beneficiary; of all the wealth of the world's goods, woman was the chief recipient. Man's wants for himself alone are indeed few and simple, but woman's wants are many and costly—the poorest, rudest woman needing comforts and luxuries which her father or husband could dispense with, and these are to be procured for her only with great labour and expense. Take, for an illustration, Judith and her 'tay,' and think of the ship-building, the sea-ploughing, and the trafficking that had to be accomplished before Judith or any other woman could get her tea. Yes, as Justin loved, served and guarded her, Britomarte, man loved, served and guarded woman all over the Christianized world. And if he kept her from the field, the forum and the polls, it was more in tender care of her delicacy than in jealous fear of her rights. Yes, as Justin had done everything for her, man had done everything for woman. If occasionally in the world a woman was enabled to stand alone, it was on the platform that man had already prepared for her. How helpless she was without this platform, how unable to stand quite alone, was well proved by Britomarte's own experience on the Desert Island. The cases in which man became the oppressor of woman were individual cases, heavily punished by law, or severely visited by public opinion.

These thoughts were new and perplexing to the man-hater, who all her life had looked but on one side of the subject.

They were interrupted by the entrance of Judith with a pleased and smiling countenance.

'Sure, ma'am, won't you come and look at the kitchen itself? Troth it's a lovely place, intirely, with beautiful windys—one lookin' to the say and one to the shore—and faix I nadent run the risk iv knocking me brains out, poking round in the smoke, as I was always afther doing in that baste iv a dark hole in the side of the mountain where I used to cook. And sure there's a convanient dresser for plates and cups and saucers, and a cupboard itself for cowld mate and bread; to say nothing iv the table with the drawer in it, and the hooks to hang me dish-towels. Sure, ma'am, ye'll come and look! Troth it will do you good!'

With a smile Britomarte arose and followed her to the kitchen, and entered into all the interest felt by Judith.

Of course the place and its appointments were not quite new to either of them; they had both watched the progress of the building, and even assisted in the lighter parts of the work, such as young apprentice boys might have been trusted with. And they had also helped to move the smaller household effects, and to arrange them in their places.

But the circumstance of taking possession of their new home and enjoying it, was a novelty to them, and they went through every part of the spacious kitchen with keen appreciation of its conveniences.

'Sure, look, ma'am! even the cat itself has sinse enough to know how much better off she is intirely. See how she sits up on the windy sill purring and basking in the sunshine! Sure she couldn't do that in the baste iv a grotto!' said the Irish girl.

'Judith, the grotto was beautiful and even comfortable in its way, and I loved it. It was our first shelter and our long dwelling place, so let us not speak ill of it,' said Britomarte, with that tenderness which all fine spirits feel for even inanimate things and places, which have become dear to them from association.

'Lorrd bless you, ma'am, you spake iv the grotto as if it was a Christian sowl itself, to be hurt wid an ill worrd! Sure, shin, if it crosses your failings, I'll not spake iv it at all. But look, ma'am, at the little dog! See how he runs about poking his nose into everything! Sure he's pleased as Punch to be in a dacent house once more. And now I'll get the dinner. Troth, it's hivenly, so it is, to be able to cook widout running the risk every minute of pitching over the cooking

stove in the dark, as I did in that haythen iv a hole in the rock!'

'Judith, your keen pleasure in the change delights me even more than the change itself,' said Miss Conyers.

But just then Judith's mood changed.

'Faix it's all very well, so it is. But sure I'm thinking it may be all in vain afther all!' she said, as she sat herself down and began to pick a duck that Justin had shot that day.

'In vain, Judith?' repeated Miss Conyers, questioningly.

'Troth, yes, and lost labour to boot.'

'But why do you think so, Judith?'

'Sure it's the way iv the world. Christians are toiling, and striving, and contriving, years and years and years, to make thimselves comfortable, and jist as soon as do that, they've got to make a change, so they have.'

'What do you mean, Judith? What has come over you? What are you thinking of?'

'Lord bless you, ma'am, don't you see? There was me own grandfather moiling and toiling for years and years to pay for his farm and his house, and as soon as he had done that, he died, so he did, and the farm and house had to be sold, and the money divided among the heirs and the creditors. And then there was me father, scraped together a little money and bought a little place, which, as soon as he done it, me poor mother, rest her sowl in hivven, died, so she did, and he broke up and immigrated. And thin there was meself, sure, jist as I got used to the ould ship, wasn't it wrecked?'

'Well, Judith, but I don't see what all that has to do with our cheerful new home?'

'Ye don't, ma'am? Well, I'll jist inlighten ye. Here we have been living on this island in a baste of a grotto for more than two years, and nobody come to take us off. But now that we've got such a beautiful house intirely, some divil of a ship will come by and carry us all home. I fale it all in me bones.'

'Well, Judith, you will not object to that?' said Britomarte.

'Oh, no, ma'am. I'll not object to that the laste taste in life. Sure it's the lost labour I'll be objecting to—the building iv the house, and all that.'

'Ah, Judith, it is not apt to be lost labour. We are but too likely to remain on this island for the term of our natural lives.'

'Lord betwane us and harm, ma'am, yer not afther manin that same? Sure I'd rather the labour be lost itself than to stay here forever to enjoy the fruits iv it.'

'Judith, we must live and trust from day to day; it is all that we can do,' said Miss Conyers, leaving her attendant to prepare the dinner, and going back to her room to resume her needle-work.

She sat and sewed, tranquil and contented, until the sun sank down to the level of the horizon—striking out a path of dazzling light across the waters—when the sun worshipper laid aside her work and watched him until he dropped down behind the waves, drawing the long trail of glory after him.

Soon after this Justin came in from his work and went into his room to wash and change his dress.

By the time he was ready, Judith had dinner on the table.

'You like your new house, sister?' said Justin, as they sat down to the table to partake of their first meal in their new home.

'Oh, yes—very much. Shall I thank you for it, Justin? No; you will not allow me to do that. Well, I will tell you how much comfort I and Judith, and even the cat and dog, take in it. Everything is delightful to us, but most delightful of all are the windows. I have been sitting at mine all the afternoon.'

'It must have been very warm, for your window has a westerly aspect,' said Justin, smiling.

'No, for when the sun streamed in I partly closed the shutter and partly drew the curtain to soften its rays, but not to hide the outlook, which was too new and delightful to be renounced. Besides, there was a strong sea-breeze.'

'I hope you will like your home, as long as you live in it, as well as you do now, dear sister,' said Justin.

'I have been thinking,' said Britomarte, 'of our prisoner. Would it not do to show him more kindness? to trust him a little and have him here with us sometimes?'

'No, dearest sister, no! What! the freebooter, throat-cutter, the ship-sinker, under the same roof with you? No, Britomarte, no! The kindness of your heart misleads you greatly when it causes you to think of such a thing! It is strange, by the way, that you, who are a man-hater in gross, should be a man-pitier in detail,' replied Justin.

'It is because the creature seems so awfully solitary; and we seem so extremely pharisaical, when there are only four of us cast away upon this Desert Island, to banish one poor wretch forever from our presence,' she answered.

'He is a freebooter, throat-cutter, ship-burner,' repeated Justin.

'Freebooter, if you will; but I doubt whether he is anything worse; he does not look to be.'

'Britomarte, we have the testimony of his own words against himself.'

'The insane boastings of an intoxicated man.'

'All the more likely to be true! "*In vino veritas*," you know. But it is strange, my sister, that even compassion should induce you to dream of tolerating the presence of such a monster.'

'He can do us no harm. And the only way to reclaim a monster is to be kind to him.'

'Enough, my sister! In all right things I will obey you. But in this, no! Your own goodness prevents you from understanding all the evil that is in this man; and he shall not be permitted to desecrate your home with his presence,' said Justin, firmly.

Britomarte was silent for a moment, and then she frankly held out her hand and replied:

'Let it be as you see fit, Justin. I dare say you are right. And I know that I can trust your well-tried friendship in all things relating to our good.'

'Trust my humanity also, sister, for all matters concerning the proper treatment of our prisoner,' said Justin, gravely, as they arose from the table.

They spent their first evening in the new house, around the centre-table in the parlour. The lamp was not lighted; for the windows were open, and the full moon was shining so splendidly as to make all the land and sea and sky almost as bright as noonday—quite as bright as a London day.

It was a new delight to Britomarte, on rising in the morning, to be able to throw open a window-shutter and gaze out upon the broad expanse of sea and sky; another to eat breakfast in a large parlour, with the cheerful light of the morning sun shining in at the eastern windows; and still another to change from room to room and enjoy the aspect of each in turn.

'Sure this is housekaping at lingth, ma'am, isn't it? It's having a home iv our own, "if it's iver so homely," as the song says. It's domistic happiness intirely, so it is,' said Judith, as she was assisting Miss Conyers to set the bed chambers in order.

'We have to thank Heaven and Mr. Rosenthal for it all, Judith.'

'Sure and so I do, ma'am. And day and night I wish meself was a praist so I cou'd marry you two togither. But faix it's the only thing I'm unable to do for ye.'

'Judith!' exclaimed Miss Conyers in a warning tone.

'Ah, bedad ye may say "Judith" and "Judith!" but faix Judith has eyes in her head and sinse in her sowl, so she has. And it's easy to see and know that you are the darling iv his heart, and the light iv his life, so ye are. And whin that divil iv a say cast us all on this baste iv an Island why the ould Nick couldn't it have cast one iv thim missionary ministers wid us to marry you both.

'Judith, you talk very foolishly at times. Pray let me hear no more of this nonsense,' said Miss Conyers, very gravely.

'Sure meself thinks it's the wisdom of Solomon. But that's a matter iv opinion. And troth if ye can't appraciate my sintiments I can hold my tongue,' retorted the Irish girl.

After breakfast every day Justin went out to his out-door work. He set out a large number of young fruit-trees that he had raised from the seed—plum, peach and apricot trees. Their cultivation upon this new soil, in this new climate, was an experiment which only time could decide to be a success or a failure.

His next work was to gather in and store the late crops of grain.

By the time this was done the wet season set in with great severity, and the cast-aways were confined for the most part to indoor occupations.

But they were not idle.

Justin would not lumber up the women's apartments—as he called the parlour, kitchen and best bed-chamber—with any of his cumbersome working materials, but he gathered them all into his own Spartan room, and there he busied himself through the first wet days with grinding, mending and arranging his tools; and then he took a great quantity of palm leaves that he had collected during the dry months, and he occupied himself with stripping them up and weaving their fibres into mats of every description—large, thin mats to cover the floor in summer, round, thick mats to lay before the doors to wipe shoes upon in muddy weather, and small fine mats to put on the table to set dishes on.

As these mats were completed he delivered them over to Judith to be stored, or to be used. The girl was especially delighted with the door mats, which she declared would save her a 'dale iv scrubbing,' and she was profuse in her expressions of gratitude to Justin, whom she declared to be always saving her life entirely with his thoughtfulness.

After having made a quantity of mats of all sorts, Justin commenced the manufacture of baskets. First he made a fine large

clothes basket, which became the pride of Judith's life, and then a dozen or more of fruit and vegetable baskets of all sizes, and lastly a work basket for Britomarte, on which he expended his finest materials, and all the taste, skill and ingenuity he possessed. It was a miracle of convenience, if not of beauty. It was rather large and oval in form, the middle space large enough to contain a good sized garment folded up, and all around that middle space little divisions like smaller baskets, to hold buttons hooks and eyes, cord, tape, thread, etc., and to keep them separate and in order, each little division had its little movable top, and the whole basket had its cover and its handle. I have been particular in describing this little affair, because its invention was a work of love, and its usefulness every woman among my readers will appreciate.

Britomarte valued it not upon account of its beauty or its usefulness, so much so because its every meshes and fibre had been woven by those beloved hands that were dearer to her than all others, yes, deny it to herself as she might, dearer to her than all others upon earth.

Judith was in raptures with the basket.

'It's a beauty iv a basket! a darlint iv a basket! a little angel iv a basket. And sure meself wishes I was clever at me nadle, so I could ate one too. But faix if I can manage to put a patch in an ould table cloth, it's as much as meself can do,' she said.

'Never mind, Judith. You can weave, and that is what neither Miss Conyers nor myself can do. I shall make another attempt at the construction of a loom this winter, and I think between my recollections of my grandmother's loom and your suggestions, I shall be able to construct one.'

'Ah, thin, if ye'd only do that same, sure I could waive beautiful cloth out iv the lovely cotton and woollen yarn I carded and spun last winter, or last wit season—if that's winter—though I'm thinking it's hot as the dhry season itself, and faix I can't tell winther from summer in this haythen iv a climate.'

Justin kept his word with Judith and laboured with the loom, putting it together and taking it to pieces, doing and undoing his work, hammering and tinkering at it all day long—when he had nothing better to do—for, in fact, the experiment of loom building was not sufficiently full of promise of success to justify the wasting upon it time that might be more profitably employed.

In the evening he joined Britomarte in the parlour, and read aloud, while she sewed and Judith knitted.

Thus passed their in-door life during the wet season.

CHAPTER XI.

THE OLD FAMILIAR FLAG.

Flag of the free heart's only home,
By loyal hands to valour given,
Thy stars have lit the welkin dome,
And all thy hues were born in heaven!
Forever float that standard sheet!
Where breathes the foe that falls before us?
With freedom's soil beneath our feet,
And freedom's banner streaming o'er us.

—*J. R. Drake.*

When spring and sunshine came again, Justin began to lay out new garden beds and to put in the seeds for early vegetables.

And Judith, to her heart's delight, began what she called her 'spring claning.' But first of all, as their boxes of hard brown soap had nearly given out, Judith showed her skill in the manufacture of soft soap from lye made of wood ashes, and grease melted from kitchen fat.

When she had succeeded in this, she commenced her 'claning.' Every housekeeper knows what that process is in the hands of a skillful woman, so it is enough to say that Judith accomplished the task in the best possible manner, and that at the end of a week's work, the house and all within and around it was as clean and neat as human skill and human hands could make it. White curtains replaced the red ones on all the windows, and the winter carpets were stowed away and the floors were covered with the matting that Justin had manufactured from the long fibres of the palm leaves during the winter months.

While Judith had been engaged in the house-cleaning, Britomarte had employed herself in laying out the front yard in parterres and planting them with flower seeds.

And Justin, in the intervals of his field and garden work built a neat cover over a clear spring at a short distance from the house, he built it of stone for coolness, and dug a channel for the spring to flow through, and paved and cemented it, so that the pans of milk and cream and pots of butter could be set in the running water. Adjoining the dairy was a temporary shed, where the cow could be driven to be fed and milked in bad weather.

'Sure it's all beautiful intirely; and I wish Crummie could go on giving millik for-

iver, so I do! But that can't be expiated, and sure she must go dhry some day, and thin whativer shall we do? Ooh-one!' cried Judith, as she contemplated her new dairy, and felt herself divided between delight in its acquisition and dread of the calamity she had foreshadowed.

'Never mind, Judith. "Sufficient unto the day," you know. And we cannot tell what may happen before Crummie goes dry. We may all be safe at home in our dear native land by that time,' said Justin, soothingly.

'Ah! Lord send that same. But aven so, all our labour here will be lost! Ooh-hone! whichiver way one looks it's heart-breaking, so it is!'

'Nonsense! whichiver way one looks the prospect is encouraging! If we are to spend our days here, we shall grow more and more comfortable every day of our lives; if we are to be rescued from here, we shall return to our own country. Be reasonable, Judith.'

'Yes, that's aisy said! But if Crummie goes dhry, what thin?' whimpered Judith.

'We must do without milk. But Crummie is not dry yet, Judith,' laughed Britomarte.

And then all returned from their inspection of the dairy and walked towards the house.

On their way thither they stopped at the sheep fold to look at a young lamb whose advent Justin had announced that morning.

When they had sufficiently admired the pretty little creature, they went on a little farther and paused at the poultry-yard to see the broods of young chickens newly hatched, that were the especial care of the Irish girl.

'The darlints! look at thim! ivry little teeny roly-poly looking like a little pod of cotton wool! forbye they are gold-coloured instead of white! And to think afther watching and feeding and caring for thim all the summer, I shall maybe have to wring their necks in the autumn. Faix meself thinks I shall niver have the heart to do it at all at all!' sighed Judith, as she gazed upon her favourites with a strange blending of pride, pity and affection.

They turned from the poultry-yard and continued their walk towards the house.

As they went on Britomarte noticed that Justin kept his eyes fixed uneasily upon the south-western quarter of the heavens, where a few wild feathery black clouds flecked the burning crimson of the sunset.

'What is it, Justin?' she inquired.

'I think we shall have a tornado to-night,' he answered, gravely.

And even as he spoke, the clouds were driven up higher and blacker, and the moans of the rising wind swept over the sea and land.

'Yes, we shall certainly have a tornado! Hurry on to the house, dear Britomarte. I must go back and put the animals under cover,' Justin, suddenly turning back and hastening towards the sheep-fold.

'And sure I must go and see if all the little chicks are safe in the hen-house, and look the door and stop the hole to keep them in it,' said Judith, as suddenly hastening after him.

Britomarte, left alone, pursued her way towards the house, while darker grew the sky and deeper moaned the wind.

In the few minutes that passed before she reached the house, the heavens had grown black as night and formed a wild contrast to the ocean, which, as far as the eye could see, was one mass of boiling snow-white foam, across which the rising wind moaned and wailed as a prophetic spirit lamenting the woe to come.

Britomarte hurried into the house and began to shut down the windows and close the shutters, hoping and praying all the time that Justin and Judith might return before the storm should burst.

When she had securely fastened up the house, as it was now pitch dark, she lighted the lamp and sat down to wait for the return of her friends.

The thunder rolled and broke, crash upon crash, like the explosion and fall of a world over head, at the same instant that the lightning shot like shafts of fire through every crevice in the house, and the rain came down as if the 'windows of heaven' had been opened for another flood.

'Heaven protect them!' exclaimed Britomarte, clasping her hands and thinking of her friends.

Then she suddenly started up and ran to the door to listen for their coming.

As she got there she heard rapid steps and hurried speech, followed immediately by loud knocks.

She tore the door open, and they rushed in, Justin, Judith and—the pirate captain—followed by the raving storm.

'Justin, exerting all his great strength, closed and barred the door against the wind and then turned to Britomarte and whispered hurriedly:

'Dear sister, go into your parlour. I will join you there presently and explain.'

Britomarte followed his advice and went back to the parlour, attended by Judith.

'Judith,' as soon as they had reached the room and closed the door, 'tell me how Mr.

ing and books, for the benefit of any future shipwrecked sufferers who might possibly be cast away upon the island.

So Britomarte went into the bed-room, and made up the beds, and tidied the wash-stands, and set the chairs straight and closed the windows, and fastened the doors.

And while she was doing that, Judith washed up all the crockery ware and cooking utensils, and put them away in the cupboards, and then she cleaned up the kitchen, and put out the fire and shut the windows and doors.

In the meantime, Justin went into the parlour and set the chairs, tables, lamps and vases straight, and laid a Bible, a hymn-book, an old copy of Shakespeare, and an old almanac, a slate-pencil, and some paper, pens and ink upon the book shelves. Then he fastened the windows and doors.

Finally, the three friends, having completed their work, met in the front passage.

'Troth,' said Judith, 'whoever comes after us can't say as we're not good housekeepers; for sure they'll find everything convenient to their hands, so they will.'

No one answered the girl. But Justin, with a grave face, summoned the two women to his side, and then, reverently lifting his hat, returned thanks to Divine Providence for their safety.

'I hope we have not kept you waiting,' said Justin.

'Not a moment. We have only just got Mistress Ould in here,' laughed the young man, pointing to Drummie.

They all then got into the boat.

Judith went immediately and stood by the head of the dog, with her hand on the creature's neck, ready to soothe and control her in case she should become frightened and restive when the boat should begin to move.

But Drummie had seen too many ups and downs in this world to be disturbed by trifles, and so she made the passage to the ship with great composure.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE STORM.

Speak pilot of the storm-tossed bark,
May I thy perils share?
—Oh, landsmen, there are fearful seas,
The brave alone may dare!
—Nay, ruler of the rebel deep,
What matters wind or wave?
The rocks that wreck your reeling deck
Will leave me nought to save.
—*O. W. Holmes.*

The captain of the Xyphias stood on deck to receive his passengers.

in heaven or on earth.

'That must have struck very near us,' said Britomarte, as the thunder rolled down the abyss of space and died away.

'Mary, Star iv the Say! . . . S'int Peter, pray for us sinners!' . . muttered Judith, invoking all the saints she could think of in an emergency.

'I think you are in more danger from damp clothing than from the thunderbolts, Judith. Go and change,' said Miss Conyers.

'If we had only a blessed candle itself, this haythen iv a storm couldn't hurt us,' whimpered Judith.

'You have your Heavenly Father, who is the Lord of the Heavens and the Earth. Appeal to Him. It is an awful storm!' said Miss Conyers, as another blinding flash of lightning pierced every crevice of the closed house, and another peal of thunder rolled and crashed over their heads, and died away in the distance.

Judith told her beads as fast as she could pass them through her fingers. She was shivering alike with terror of the tempest and chilliness from her wet clothes. And Britomarte again urged her to go and change them.

'Sure I daren't leave the room. If I'm given him a change of dry clothes and put him on my bed.'

'You did right, dear Justin, quite right. I should not like you if you could treat even a bad man badly,' said Miss Conyers.

'Sure the wicked should be thrated according to their wickedness,' put in Judith.

'If that were the rule, which of us would go unpunished?' inquired Miss Conyers.

Again a blaze of lightning, a crash of thunder, a blast of wind and a torrent of rain suspended their conversations. When this burst of the storm was over, Justin said—

'Now, as soon as possible I want Judith to prepare some gruel, or panado, or broth, or whatever is good for a sick man.'

'Troth, Judith will set him up with it, and you, too. Divil a bit iv me will stir a fut to go nigh the iron stove in this baste of a storm, for any cause, at all at all, let alone to make gruel for a marthering divil like that, which same would be a tempting iv Providence,' said Judith, obstinately.

'I will go,' said Miss Conyers, and she arose to leave the room, followed by Justin.

'Och hone! Ow-oe!' howled Judith, running after them. 'Sure will the two iv ye leave me here, to be shtruck down alone

of the ship, leaning over the taff-rail, and looking upon the Island, until the Xyphias began to leave the turn, and then as the wind filled her canvas, to sail away for the open sea. They watched the lonely isle as it gradually receded from their sight, until palm trees, rocks and caverns were mingled in one undistinguishable mass of colour—they watched it until it dropped lower and lower down towards the horizon—until its outline became confused with the boundaries of sky and sea—and then they turned away and Britomarte drew her veil to hide her fast falling tears.

When she lifted it again there was nothing around her but the lonely sea and sky. The captain came to her side and spoke cheerfully:

'The cabin of a man-of-war is not exactly that of a first-class ocean steamer, Miss Conyers, nor was it designed especially with a view to the accommodation of ladies. Nevertheless, we are so happy to have a lady with us that we shall do all in our power to make you comfortable.'

'I am very sure you will, captain,' answered Britomarte.

'And this I will say for your encouragement. Although you came on board with the full knowledge that we are cruising about in quest of rebel privateers, with no prospect of going home for some time to three passengers. Out of courtesy they accepted his invitation; but having breakfasted at eight, they could make but a poor pretence to lunch at eleven. At two they had a sumptuous dinner, at five they had tea, and at eight supper. And all this eating and drinking made such a hard day's work, that the captain's pampered passengers were glad to turn in at ten o'clock.

The next morning, to awake and remember that they had left the lonely Island forever, and were far away on the ocean again, with a prospect, though ever so remote, of once more reaching their native land, and greeting their old friends, was a sensation of strangely mingled pain and joy, such as it is seldom the fate of human beings to experience.

This second day of their voyage was a pleasanter one than the first, principally because the captain, having discovered the temperate habits of his passengers, did not insist upon their making five meals a day.

They were steering for Cape Town, where the captain hoped to anchor by the end of that current week.

'We may meet a homeward bound vessel there,' he said; 'if so, we will put you on board of her.'

'It is you who are now anxious to get rid of us, captain,' said Miss Conyers, archly.

And the jolly captain put on the air of a

---

home, and bear it off to destruction.

But the mad night of tempest and terror passed at last.

Neither Judith nor Britomarte knew exactly when they dropped asleep, except that it must have been near day, when the storm had expended its violence, and they had exhausted their strength with watching.

It was late in the morning when Britomarte awoke. She arose without disturbing Judith, who was still sleeping. She opened the blinds and looked out. The sky was clear and bright, and the sun was shining down upon a green and smiling land. The sea, indeed, was still high and foaming. But a thousand birds were singing their morning songs of joy at the passing of the storm.

At first, dazzled by the brilliancy of the scene, Britomarte saw nothing of the damage that had been done. But as her vision cleared, she saw that trees had been torn up by the roots, or blown down, or shred of their branches that strewed the ground. Their outhouses and fences, indeed, for their very lowliness, had escaped the fury of the storm, and were standing safe. Such was the aspect of the land.

hope that Miss Riordan will not object to giving him a cup of tea and a round of dry toast this morning.'

'Oh, no! Now that Judith's panic has ceased, she has come to her senses,' said Miss Conyers, going into the kitchen to give the requisite orders.

'I'll just tell ye what, ma'am! There was only eight barrels iv flour saved out'n the wreck, and for nearly two years we three people have been eating of it; and for more than six months we four, counting the pirate, have been using of it! And though I've eked it out as well as I could, wid using male and rice and vigitables, still it is getting low! We've opened the last barrel, and this is the first loaf iv bread made out iv it; and I want it to last till to-morrow, so I do! And now you want to throw away a lot iv it in dhry toast for that naythen!' said the indignant Irish girl, as soon as she had received Miss Conyers' orders.

'Judith, I am ashamed of you! If it was our last loaf we should divide it with a sick man, though that sick man were the greatest miscreant on earth! And with a whole barrel of flour, and when the flour gives out, a whole hogshead of wheat in the grain.'

from the deck would be invited into the captain's cabin to receive their share of the entertainment.

Sometimes, also, Miss Conyers sang out for her friends. And this singing was perhaps the greatest treat she could give them. A woman's sweet voice carolling their favourite songs on the blue water was a novelty and a delight indeed.

Thus pleasantly passed the days until Saturday morning, when they made Table Mount. And on Saturday noon they anchored in Table Bay.

Justin and Britomarte went on shore to call upon their friends at Cape Town.

They went first to the South African College, but learned there that their old acquaintance, Professor Jack, had gone to Europe to collect certain rare scientific works for his library.

Then they went out to Silver Tree Villa to see their esteemed friends the Burneys.

They found the Reverend Doctor and his family at home and in good health, but immeasurably astonished and delighted to see Mr. Rosenthal and Miss Conyers, for they had heard of the wreck of the Sultana, and had supposed their young friends to have been lost.

And next it was the turn of Justin and Britomarte to be equally astonished and delighted, for they learned that the life-boat

old father. I am so glad he is not left childless in his old age. He could not have heard of her safety before he could have heard of the shipwreck.'

'Yes.'

'What news this will be for Judith, by the way.'

'Yes. I can see her face now.'

'But Justin, which boat was her sweetheart in, do you know? If he was in the boat with the missionaries he was saved,' anxiously exclaimed Miss Conyers.

Justin reflected a moment and then answered:

'I do not know. I have been trying to recollect, but in vain. Heaven grant that he may have been saved, for the poor faithful girl's sake.'

They dined with the Burneys, but were obliged to decline all further hospitality, as the length of their ship's stay at Cape Town was very uncertain.

So they took an affectionate leave of their friends and returned on board the Xyphias in good time for the captain's early supper-table, which was spread with all the luxuries to be obtained at Cape Town.

'I have news of the Sea Scourge. She touched here on the day before yesterday, remained a few hours to get in wood and water and also to pick up a few seamen and

she pinned the end of it to her apron while running up a long seam. Every time she found it necessary to change the place of the pin, she raised her head and looked out the ocean.

How monotonous and solitary looked that ocean! No change ever came over it except the change from storm to calm, or from day to night, and vice versa. No living thing ever appeared on it or above it except the plunging fish and the sailing water fowl. But she loved it; and she watched its gradual subsidence from passion to peace as she would have watched the falling to sleep of some sufferer who was dear to her.

All the long forenoon she sat sewing and watching the ocean. Towards noon it had become wonderfully calm, considering the recent storm.

Once, on changing the place of the pin that held her work, she looked up and gazed far out to sea—far out to where the western horizon touched the water. She held her breath—she strained her eyes—and then with a cry she started up, threw down her work, ran into the parlour, caught up the pocket telescope, rushed back to the window, kneeled down, drew out the cylinders, rested it upon the window sill, trained

gone mad, or what had gone wrong.

'It is a ship, Judith! Oh, Judith, it is a ship! And it bears our stars and stripes!' said Britomarte, raising her head from Justin's breast, and releasing herself from his embrace.

'Praised be to all the saints!' piously ejaculated Judith.

'Praise be to the Merciful Lord of Heaven and Earth!' said Britomarte, reverently.

Justin lifted his hat and said 'Amen.'

And then all three hurried down to the beach by the Cove to look for the ship.

She was coming very fast. She was entering the Cove! They could see her colours well with the naked eye. When she had got a little into the Cove, where the water was smooth, she dropped anchor and let down a boat, which was soon manned by half-a-dozen stout oarsmen, commanded by an officer in the naval uniform of the United States. A flag-staff, bearing the stars and stripes, was planted in the stern. And the oarsmen pulled stoutly for the beach.

As the boats neared them, Justin raised his hat to salute the colours. Britomarte waved her handkerchief; Judith followed

The shoot upon the Irish girl was very different from that which Britomarte had anticipated.

'That I nivir may sin,' cried Judith. 'And I've been wearing out their clothes all this time!'

'Oh, Judith, don't think of their clothes, but of their rescued lives, and thank Heaven for their preservation!' said Miss Conyers.

'And thin to think that all me harrd graiving wint for nothing. So much lost labour intirely,' complained Judith.

'Oh, girl, girl, it seems to me that you are sorry they were saved,' said Miss Conyers.

'Divil a bit iv me is sorry they were saved. But it's sorry I am to me heart's core for wearing out all their good clothes, let alone losing me labour wid graving for thim. Faix meself wishes people would be raisonable and when they're gwine to live would let us know it and not be fooling.'

'Judith, I often think that there are times and seasons when you are *non compos mentis*.'

'Troth meself don't see what the compass has got to do wid it. But sure that Indy shawl will niver do to go on her shoulders agin. What wid the sun and the rain and the salt say wather itself, it's sp'ilt entirely.'

Britomarte gave it up. She longed to know whether Judith's lover had been on board the ship, but she could not bring herself to ask the question.

'The weather promises to be fine,' said the captain, coming down the companion ladder.

'Let us hope the weather will keep its promise!' answered Justin, a little confusedly, for he fancied that the captain's words had a double meaning.

They played their rubber of whist as usual and then retired to rest.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE CHASE.

Ye sailors on the mighty deep,
Your sacred oaths we bid you keep,
We bid you faithful stand;
The laws your fathers writ in blood,
The flag they bore through flame and flood,
Keep with true heart and hand!

—*Anon.*

With the first tide the next morning the ship sailed.

The weather kept its promise and was very fine.

The ship steered north-east, flying before a fresh wind at the rate of ten or eleven knots an hour.

And all day long our passengers lounged upon the deck, reading, promenading or chatting, and all the evening they played whist in the captain's cabin.

the strand, the others sprang on shore, and the men waved their hats with another prolonged

'Hurrah!'

CHAPTER XLI.

THE UNION.

The union of hands,
The union of hearts,
The union of States naught can sever!
The union of hands,
The union of hearts,
And the flag of our union forever!

—*G. P. Morris.*

'Welcome!'

This was the first word that sprang alive from the heart to the lips of Justin Rosenthal, as he held out both his hands and cordially grasped those of the young officer who stepped on shore.

He was a very handsome fellow, this young sailor, of slight but elegant figure, of dark olive complexion, dark brown hair and moustache, and dark hazel eyes. His expression of countenance was gracious, his movements graceful, and his manners courteous. In a word, he had the air of a true gentleman.

On both sides a half suppressed eagerness of curiosity. On that of the young officer to know how these American citizens happened to be found on the Desert Isle in the Indian Ocean. And on that of Justin to know how the war went in his native land, and also with him it was something more than curiosity, it was almost an agony of anxiety. And it broke forth as they went on.

'Outward or homeward bound?' he inquired.

'Outward,' replied the young lieutenant.

'I am sorry for that! I had hoped that you were going home. Nevertheless you are as welcome—as welcome as—what shall we say, Miss Conyers? What simile shall we find to express how welcome he is?' said Justin, turning to Britomarte.

'None so strong as the simple fact,' answered Britomarte, and then, turning with a smile to the visitor, she added, 'You are as welcome, sir, as friends from home to exiles on a Desert Island.'

Lieutenant Ethel bowed.

'From what port are you last?' inquired Justin.

'From New York.'

'And where bound? You must not take exceptions to my asking many questions. I shall ask as many as a Yankee in the pursuit of information and difficulties. Remember

crew were almost desperate, but too well disciplined to break out.

At length one evening when the tropical full moon and great stars made all the sky and sea almost as bright as day, and the officers off duty were lounging on the deck, and the captain and his party were playing whist in the cabin, there came a cry from the man at the mast-head:

'Sail ho!'

It roused the officers on deck like the blast of a trumpet does the war-horse. They 'sniffed the battle afar off.'

It startled all the whist players in the cabin, except the phlegmatic captain, who went on continuing his points:

'Two by tricks and two by honours! and five before! We're hine to their nine, Miss Conyers. And now all depends upon the odd trick. So we must look sharp!—I knew we should overhaul her at last! Partner, it's my deal.'

But no one listened to the captain. Every one was straining their ears to catch the voices from the deck.

'Sail ho!'

The cry rang through the night air like an alarum.

'Where away?' called the officer of the forward watch.

He won the odd trick.

'We've beat them in the rub, Miss Conyers. Shall we try to beat them in another one?' inquired the captain, as he gathered up the cards.

'Oh no! pray don't! let us go up on deck, and look after the chase!' eagerly urged Britomarte.

'You!' exclaimed the captain, in laughing astonishment.

'Yes, I!' answered Britomarte, as her eyes widened and brightened.

'Lord bless my soul alive, here is a young lady as eager for the fray as any of us!' laughed the captain. 'I'll warrant you, when you get back to your native country, if the war is not over, to take an active part in it.'

'That I shall!' answered Britomarte, emphatically. And all the while she looked her eager impatience to get upon the deck.

'There is no necessity for haste, my dear young lady. We shall see nothing when we get there!—except what we have seen for so many days and nights—an expanse of sea and sky!' laughed the captain.

'But the strange sail?' eagerly questioned our stranger.

'Aye, the strange sail! You'll not see her, at all events! The men have made her out only through their glasses! She is miles

---

and fretted Justin.

'Well, hundreds of thousands of brave men are there, striking hard blows in the good cause.'

'But still the Rebels have the advantage, you say?'

'Yes; for in every battle they fight as Leonidas fought at Thermopylæ—as Roland fought at Roncesvalles. But this state of things cannot last. It is only a question of time. We shall overwhelm them by numbers at length, if in no other way. There is something pathetic and tragical in the aspect of the South now, in the midst of her delusive victories. It is to see so much heroism and self-devotion wasted upon a cause as evil as it is hopeless.'

Britomarte turned to look at the young speaker, and thought that she had never seen a face or heard a voice more interesting or more eloquent.

'You have a broad vision and a large heart. You are brave and patriotic, but you are also just and generous. You fight gallantly for your country, yet you feel deeply for the brave, misguided men who have brought all this woe upon her! And you would willingly be the Curtius to plunge living into this yawning gulf of disunion if

[illegible] and ushered the guest into the hall, and through that into the parlour.

'Thanks,' said the young stranger, removing his cap, and gazing around upon one of the pleasantest summer rooms he had ever seen in his life. Straw matting was on the floor, snow white curtains at the vine-shaded windows, fresh flowers on the mantel-shelf and on the tables, and coolness, comfort and beauty everywhere.

Justin handed him a chair.

Judith ran out to prepare refreshments.

When they were all seated, the young lieutenant said:

'Everything I see around you increases my astonishment and curiosity. You seem really to be comfortably and permanently colonized here.

'Heaven forbid!' exclaimed Justin quickly. 'We have been here over two years, and passed a not unhappy period. But we have had enough of it, and want to get home.'

'But—how—came—you—here?' inquired the young man, slowly and emphatically.

'Ah, you have really asked the question at last. I thought I should bring you to it!' laughed Justin. Then growing suddenly grave as he thought of the shipwreck, he said:

in showers of phosphoric sparks each side her bowsprit.

Britomarte reeled and tottered and clung to Justin's arm to steady her steps, for she could scarcely keep her feet for the violent motion of the ship that rolled as tremendously as she ran.

'Miss Conyers, take my advice and let me lead you below,' said Justin.

'Thanks,' she replied. And he assisted her down into the cabin.

Leaving her there with Judith, he returned on deck and rejoined the captain.

'Mr. Ethel! See if we are gaining on the chase,' said Captain Yetsom, after a few minutes had elapsed.

'Ay, ay, sir!' replied the young lieutenant. And walking forward a few paces, he sang out:

'Mast-head!'

'Ay, ay, sir!' hawled the man on the lookout.

'Are we gaining on the chase?'

'Ay, ay, sir; but gradually. We won't overhaul her at this rate before morning.'

'That will do,' said the captain, when the young officer made his report. 'Keep her so. I do not care to overhaul her until daylight.'

And he set the watch and went below, and turned in for a short nap, leaving Lieutenant Ethel to manage the ship.

To have heard Judith talk then, you would have imagined her to be Boadicea, Joan of Arc and Moll Pitcher rolled into one.

So passed the night in the cabin.

Just before the dawn of day, Lieutenant Ethel came below to the captain and reported the chase within range of their lee-bow gun.

'Fire a blank cartridge into her,' said the captain, immediately turning out.

Britomarte and Judith overheard every word of this short interview. And Judith clapped her hands for joy, exclaiming—

'Now they're going to begin. Sure myself is happy as Paddy a Donnybrook Fair. An, oh! that I was up on deck wid the men! Wouldn't I—'

'Boom—m—me!' thundered the cannon over the sea, with a report that shook the ship.

With a violent bound Judith leaped up, clapped her hands to her ears, and, shaking and screaming with the extremity of terror, hid her head in Britomarte's lap.

'Why, what's the matter, Judith?' inquired Miss Conyers, as the sound rolled away. 'Is this your heroism?'

'S'int Peter and all the Holy Apostles! Mother Mary and all the blissid virgins!' gasped the panic-stricken girl.

struck so high and fast between the rocks, and held so long together.'

'Yes, it enabled us to save nearly all her cargo, provisions, and even furniture and live stock,' said Justin.

'It was a stupendous undertaking to remove them all.'

'Yes; but it was successfully accomplished; and it enabled us to establish ourselves comfortably here.'

'Yes, indeed,' assented the young man, looking approvingly around upon the pleasant room. 'That was more than two years ago. And you have lived here ever since, quite isolated from the world.'

'Yes.'

'And in all that time no ship has passed.'

'Yes, one ship! But of that hereafter. Tell me now, lieutenant, how you come to be so far out of your course as to touch this island?'

'We are not out of our course. We are cruising about these latitudes on the look-out for rebel privateers, as I told you. We were just as likely to find one lying to in your cove as anywhere else hereabouts.'

'Just,' answered Justin, emphatically.

'But we did not exactly come in here to look for them. In fact, we suffered some injury from the gale last night, and this

fried fish, and broiled chicken.

'It is our luncheon hour,' said Justin; 'draw up and partake.'

The young lieutenant frankly accepted the invitation.

They gathered round the table, and while they ate they talked of the war for the Union.

The young officer gave his host a detailed account of all those disastrous engagements that had followed the first fatal field of Bull Run. But always he spoke hopefully of the future. When luncheon was over the young man arose and thanked his host and prepared to return to his ship.

'The captain will come on shore to see you, I am sure. How long we may have to remain here for repairs I do not know; a few days, I suppose; but when we sail of course you and your party will go with us?' he said.

'Of course we shall, with your captain's kind permission,' replied Justin, with a smile.

'We are not homeward bound, as I have already told you. We are cruising in search of rebel privateers. We may be some months longer in these latitudes, and we may have a sea fight or so. Still I think, upon the whole, your prospect will be better in going with us than in staying here.'

'Immeasurably better. Besides we can

Everything there was in admirable order. None of the confusion that too often p ecedes an engagement appeared.

The deck was cleared for action.

The men were all at their quarters, the officers at their posts.

The captain was standing on the quarter deck, levelling his g ass at the chase, which was, moreover, in full sight about two miles ahead.

The firing ceased for the time being.

'What is the meaning of this lull, captain?' respectfully inquired Justin Rosenthal, coming to the side of Captain Yetsom.

Sailors will swear, more is the pity, and Captain Yetsom, dropping the telescope to his side, blew off a tremendous oath, under the impression that he had a sufficient provocation to do so, and then he added—

'We are on a false scent, sir. We have been chasing an English ship.'

'Are you certain?' doubtingly inquired Justin.

'Humph! These infernal pirates sometimes show false colours. That is what has happened, Mr. Rosenthal. When I came up on deck I found her within good range of our lee-bow chaser. I ran up the stars and stripes and sent a blank cartridge into her by way of a visiting card. She returned the compliment by firing a salute from her

'You are not on a false scent, captain.'

'Eh? What do you make of her?'

'The Sea Scourge.'

'Are you quite certain?'

'Quite. I cannot be mistaken. Indeed, I recognised her by naked eye from her general appearance. And when I brought the glass to bear upon her, I knew her also by individual marks.'

The captain of the Xyphias waited to hear no more. He laid down his telescope, sprang upon the poop deck, and drew out his speaking trumpet.

As the men had scarcely taken their eyes off their captain during the fifteen minutes of suspense in which they stood idly at their quarters, there was no need to call their attention.

The captain put the speaking trumpet to his lips, and thundered forth the words:

'My lads!—The prize that we have been seeking, the Sea Scourge, is before us. And please heaven she shall be ours before night!'

Tremendous cheers from the seamen responded to the captain's pithy speech, and proved their good-will to the work before them, and their confidence of victory.

---

lady.

So with a courteous bow the young lieutenant lifted his cap and left the house, accompanied by Justin.

They walked down to the beach, where they found the boat waiting. The young officer motioned Justin to precede him, and then followed him into it.

And the oarsmen took their oars, pushed off from the land, and struck out for the ship.

Five minutes of rapid rowing brought them alongside.

The captain stood on deck, waiting to receive the stranger.

The young lieutenant stepped on board accompanied by Justin, saluted his superior officer, and then presented his companion.

'Captain Yetsom, Mr. Rosenthal.'

The two gentlemen then introduced to each other in rather formally.

'Wrecked from the Saltana, some two years since, and cast with two companions on this Desert Island,' the young officer went on to explain.

'Lord bless my soul alive! Come down into my cabin and take a glass of wine,' said the captain, as if the calamity had just been conveyed, and the sufferer was in immediate need of a restorative.

Captain Yetsom was what might well be

ing you to return with me and spend the afternoon and evening at our rustic dwelling,' said Justin, standing cap in hand.

'Not to-day. To-morrow perhaps. We shall be here three or four days, at least. The ship's carpenter reports our injuries from the late gale much more serious, or, at least, more extensive than we had supposed them to be. He says it will take the best part of a week to get her ready for sea again. When we sail I hope you will go with us. I dare say you have no desire to colonise here?'

'Not the slightest. I and my companions in exile will very gladly take passage with you,' said Justin.

'And I shall be very glad to have you. But mind! I do not promise to take you home immediately. We may have a beat or two with the rebel privateers first,' explained the captain.

'No more I am!' I should enjoy a beat or two with the rebel privateers; and hope a hand in it as well as I could.'

'I'll warrant you.'

'And now, captain, I have a large quantity of provisions, consisting of live stock, fresh vegetables, fish, eggs, fruits, and so forth, which I would like to place at your disposal,' said Justin.

'Oh, I wouldn't like to rob you of them.

The gunner in charge of the lee bow chaser was an old and experienced one.

The lieutenant gave him the order, word for word, as he had received it from the captain.

'We'll try, sir,' said the veteran, with a confident smile and pat on the breech of his gun, which satisfied the lieutenant that the gunner knew his business. The gun was now ready. He sighted her, and gave the command—

'Fire!'

Out poured the deafening discharge, and two hundred pairs of eyes were tracking the course of the ball through the air, each in impatient suspense to see the effect.

It struck close under the stern of the enemy.

'A good shot! a capital shot!' exclaimed the captain. 'A little more elevation on your next, and you will splinter his mizzen mast!'

Meanwhile Lieutenant Ethel raised his telescope and took sight at the chase. And it seemed that the captain of the Sea Scourge, finding that his false colours did not protect him, and having a ball drop so close under his stern, concluded that he was known, and determined to fight the battle out under his true ones. Down fluttered St. George's Cross, and up flew the Stars and Bars. And the next instant his stern chaser

together over a piece of flesh under the fellow's pantaloons with an unmerciful squeeze.

The dead man sprang up with wonderful agility, and, amid piercing shrieks, bawled out:

'I'm shot again! I'm shot again! Take me down below. Take me down below!'

Such peals of laughter followed this, that the lad opened his eyes, looked about, came to his senses and realised his position.

At the captain's command he went forward and slunk out of sight.

The next shot from the Sea Scourge took off the head of the brave old salt, spinning it round and round until it struck the deck, while the headless body sank quivering down upon the very spot where but a moment before the form of the coward had rolled.

But—

'The coward dies many deaths,
The brave man dies but once.'

Shot after shot was now exchanged between the ships with little effect; the Xyphias all the while gradually drawing nearer the Sea Scourge, and the chase growing more exciting.

At length a lucky shot from the Xyphias struck the enemy's mizzen-mast, just

'Ay, ay, sir!'

'Then I will take leave of you,' said Justin.

'Ahem! Wait one moment,' said the captain.

Justin waited.

'Ahem! Ahem! Ahem! You say that you have plenty of fresh provisions over there?'

'Plenty, captain; and they are heartily at your service,' said Justin, suppressing a smile.

'Beef?'

'No, I am sorry to say, no beef. We have but one milch cow.'

'That's bad, Master!'

'Running; not killed. You see we never kill sheep at this season, for one would spoil before we could eat it.'

'Humph! that's bad again. But a sleek-faced steer wouldn't spoil before we could eat it here on shipboard.'

'You shall have your choice of the flock to-morrow, captain.'

'Thank you; I will take it then. Have you chickens?'

'Yes, I am happy to say that we have chickens in our larder already prepared to cook.'

'Ahem! send me a pair for my supper

And Justin touched his hat and went back to the boat.

Justin sprang into the parlour, where Britomarte, with tea ready, waited for him.

'Oh, Justin! what a joy to think that we shall leave this lonely isle, and sail for our native land once more!' she exclaimed.

'Yes, an unutterable joy!' replied Justin.

'Ah! what a change has a few hours brought about. This morning, when we arose, we had no more idea of being rescued from this island than we had had on any day in the two years and a half that we have spent here!'

'No, indeed! Let us think the Lord for this great deliverance.'

'Oh, I do! I do!' said Britomarte, fervently.

Then a silence fell between them for a few minutes, a silence which Britomarte at length broke by asking:

'Our prisoner, Justin—what about him? Have you told the captain of him?'

'No, not yet. I have concluded to defer all mention of our prisoner until to-morrow, when his friends and his officers are coming to dine with us.'

'Yes, that will be the best opportunity of introducing the subject,' assented Britomarte.

There came no response from the helmsman; and indeed in the same instant that he ceased speaking the captain perceived that the man was past hearing. He reached the helm too late. The ship was already taken aback and lying directly across the course of the Xyphias, and not two cables' length from her. He gave the helm to a seaman near, and springing from the poop deck, yelled forth the order:

'Rake her with your port battery!'

Then issued forth a tremendous discharge that shook the privateer from mast-head to keel, so that she trembled like a living creature struck with palsy. Then he braced her yards and put her wheel hard down so as to bring her again upon her course.

Meanwhile from the deck of the Xyphias, Captain Yetsom, observing the privateer in the act of broaching to, first looked, expecting to see her haul down her colours. But as they continued to fly, he put his helm to clear the Xyphias from the raking fire that he foresaw would be poured into her from the port battery of the enemy.

But so quickly did the Sea Scourge broach to, that the Xyphias could not get away in time; and so she received the enemy's whole broadside obliquely over her lee bows, with disastrous effect.

The rear of the cannon, the crash of the came upon crash. The shrieks of the wounded on both sides mingled with each other and with the cheers of their unhurt companions.

Justin was everywhere—inspiring the brave to still greater deeds of valour, encouraging the faint-hearted till they outrivalled the most heroic, helping all by precept and example, and serving at the guns where men had fallen until relieved.

And now the foremast of the Sea Scourge was seen to totter and fall!

While the enemy was encumbered with this wreck, Captain Yetsom set his courses and shooting ahead, took up a raking position, from which he poured into the Sea Scourge a galling fire of grape and canister.

The privateer imprudently returned the fire with her bow chasers, and promptly cleared her deck from the wreck of the foremast.

Captain Yetsom, seeing that with the indomitable courage of his countrymen she would sink before she would surrender, and seeing also that she was manœuvring to get into position again, determined to carry her by the board.

He stood off for a short time and gathered his officers and men about him and said:

'That privateer is well fought. Her men

---

and provided with wooden cups hollowed out from blocks of palm logs, to hold the water for the flowers.

Judith in the kitchen, was up to her eyes in pastry, jelly and custard.

'Sure it is a blessing intirely that I was so saving of the sugar, using the sweet sap from the canes in the swamp as often as ever I could to make it last. And a notable favour iv Crummie not to go dhry. Troo for ye, ma'am, wid the sugar and the milk and the eggs and the fresh fruit itself, I can make a dessert fit for the royal family to sit down to, let alone the dinner that will go before it, wid fresh fish and ham and roast chicken and pigeon pie. And the idea iv our having company to dinner, ma'am. Sure it's in a dhrame I'm thinking I am all the time. Plase, ma'am, will ye be so good as to pinch me, to see if I'm awake itself?' said Judith to Miss Conyers, who had come into the kitchen for more water for her flowers.

'Don't you think if you were to put your finger to the hot stove, it would do as well, Judith?' laughed Britomarte.

'Faix, so ma'am. I niver could abide a burn. And troth if it is a dhrame itself, I don't know as I care to wake. To think I used to say, whin we came into this new house, that if we had only one neighbour there.'

'Exactly. And the officers are coming here to dine to-day.'

'The captain and as many officers as he can bring, are coming.'

'Precisely. So I understood from the gabble of the women flying past my door. Now I tell you what, Mr. Rosenthal, I wish to surrender myself to the captain of the Xyphias.'

'You will do well,' said Justin, with a feeling of intense relief, 'that will be your best possible course and it will save me from the distressing duty of delivering up a man whom I have sheltered in his need and nursed in his illness.'

'And shaken and choked in his cups and handcuffed and looked up in his sleep, ha, ha, ha, ho, ho, ho!' laughed the man.

'It was the monster who proclaimed himself a rebel and a pirate, boasted himself a throat-cutter and a ship-sinker, that I took care of in that way. Such a monster was not to be let loose upon two helpless women, who had not even the means of securely barricading their doors against him,' calmly replied Justin.

'Ha, ha, ha! Ho, ho, ho! Yes, when I'm in liquor I'm always a monster by my own account. I have then a mad delight in inspiring fear, horror and detestation.'

doing? Where Justin had left her, she had sat studying what she might do to help the good cause. Suddenly she found out her mission.

'There will be wounded men,' she said, 'and no one to attend to them in the excitement of the action.'

And she arose and op ned her trunks and boxes, and took from them all the soft old linen she could find, and sat down to tear it into bandages and having done that, she began to pick the shreds that were left into lint.

While Britomarte was engaged in this humane work, her panic-stricken companion lay in one of the berths, with her head under the cover, trying to deafen herself to the sound of the battle.

When the shrieks and groans of the wounded and dying began to mingle with the roar of the cannon and the crash of timbers, then Britomarte gathered up her linen bandages and lint and put them in a little basket with a pair of scissors, a flat knife and needles and thread, and with the basket on her arms, she went on deck.

Everybody was too busy there to see or stop her.

Through the black and sulphurous smoke, through pools of blood, between dead bodies, headless of the cannon balls that tore

'I believe you would. You are formed of the metal of which heroes are made!'

'Let me help you,' said Britomarte, feeling impatient of his praise, and pointing to the basket of linen bandages and lint that she carried in her hand.

'Well, my child, you can help me, and you may. And at least you had better be down below with me binding up the wounds, than up on deck with the gunners helping to make them, as I think was your first aspiration,' replied the doctor.

'Yes,' said Britomarte, 'I should like to serve at one of the guns, but since I am not permitted to do so, I am willing to be useful in any other way. And you will find that I shall not dress our brave sailor's wounds any the less tenderly because I should prefer to make wounds for other people to dress on the bodies of the foemen.'

And saying these words, she followed the doctor down into the cockpit, where the wounded lay, some in hammocks, some on sail cloth, and some on the naked planks.

And there her courage, her humanity, and above all, her divine purity, so impressed the ship's surgeon, that he did utterly forget that she was a young lady, and he made her as useful as if she had been a medical student.

At the surgeon's orders, with her sharp

you have withheld to your hurt for six months?'

'Why again. Can a good man ask? It is because you brought me in from the storm, struck the fetters from my wrists, gave me your own clothes, laid me upon your own bed, and nursed me like a brother. That's the reason why I have explained to you first. In any case I should have to give a true account of myself to the captain of the Xyphias, to whom I intend to surrender.'

'Then you are not really what you reported yourself to be?'

'What exactly did I report myself to be —Captain Kydd?' laughed the man.

'A pirate, throat-cutter, ship-burner?'

'Ha, ha, ha! Rebel I am, since you dub as such the commanders of all Confederate privateers. But I never cut a throat or burned a ship in my life. I never harmed a woman or child in my life, or man either for that matter, except in fair fight.'

'I am glad [illegible] you say so. Perhaps you will be able to convince Captain Yotsom of the truth of your statement. You had better surrender to him as soon as he arrives. I will give you an opportunity of doing so in the parlour. After you have made your case clear to the captain, I shall be glad to have you join us at dinner. There is my wardrobe—a limited one indeed—at your

hall door to receive his guests.

There was the floyd captain, the two lieutenants, the chaplain, the surgeon, the doctor and the purser—a party of six, come to dine with Justin.

'How do you do? how do you do?' said the captain, heartily shaking Justin's offered hands. 'That pair of fowls was delicious I tell you, and the fish and eggs were a fine addition to my breakfast this morning. Let me introduce these gentlemen; the Rev. Mr. White, ship's chaplain; Lieutenant Ethel, you know; Lieutenant Robins; Dr. Brown, ship's surgeon; Mr. Bruce, ship's purser. Gentlemen, Mr. Rosenthal.'

Having accomplished this introduction with a great deal of ceremony, the captain, with his officers, followed his host into the parlour, where there was another introduction—namely, to Miss Conyers, who received the party with graceful courtesy.

'And now Mr. Rosenthal,' said the captain, as soon as they were all seated, 'my men with the boat are down below there waiting your orders concerning the shipping of those provisions you talked of. If you will send one of your hands to show them where they are, they will go to work immediately.'

'You forget,' said Justin, smiling, 'that I have no hands but those with which nature has provided me. I should not like

too busy with his wounded to go and see for himself.

Britomarte had dressed the last wound of her last patient, and was holding a glass of brandy and water to his lips, for he was faint from the loss of blood, when another injured man—a young midshipman—was brought down.

And he reported that the captain had resolved to carry the enemy by the board.

'And that brave young fellow, Mr. Rosenthal, is foremost among the boarding party, fighting like another Paul Jones,' he added.

Britomarte listened breathlessly; but waited quietly until her patient had drained the glass that she held to his lips, and then she gently laid his head back, put down the glass, and rushed up on deck.

She reached that horrible deck—the scene of the late carnage. It was slippery with human gore, and spattered with brains, and littered with the splinters of shivered timbers and shreds of rent canvas, and fragments of broken weapons, and obstructed with dead bodies; and over all hung a sulphurous smoke of gunpowder that obscured the vision and blackened all the sails and rigging; and above all rang the clash of steel, the report of fire-arms, the

'Oh, God of battles! give strength to my weak woman's arm this day!' she rushed over to the deck of the Sea Scourge in the midst of the hell of war, and stood by her lover's side.

Meantime Justin had singled out the pirate Captain Mulligan as his own; and also Mulligan, who was a brave man, had sought out the mighty champion of the Xyphias.

And at the moment in which our amazon, cutlass in hand, boarded the Sea Scourge, these two met; and Justin's other assailants fell back at a signal from their captain. And now, between the two, stroke followed stroke in rapid succession, each very adroitly parried. At length Mulligan lost his temper, and with that his presence of mind, and made a fierce lunge at his adversary's heart, which was quickly parried, and before he could come to his guard again, Justin brought down a crushing stroke upon his head that felled him to the deck.

But as he was in the act of levelling this fatal blow, he caught a glimpse of a seaman with a cocked pistol pointed close to his head. He thought that his time had come; he mentally prayed that his soul might be received in heaven; he heard the report of the pistol; felt the ball whizz through his

him to see you. Remember, that he has not even heard of your presence here yet.'

'And my sudden appearance might kill him with joy! Is that it? Well go and break the news gently, Mr. Rosenthal,' laughed the Rebel, sarcastically.

Justin went into the parlour.

'Back already?' exclaimed the jolly captain of the Xyphias.

'Yes, and I have some news to tell you?'

'News! what, on this place? It must be that Columbus has discovered America; or the Dutch taken Holland.'

'No; but it is that we have taken the captain of the Sea Scourge.'

'Lord bless my soul and body, man; are you mad?'

'No, nor dreaming. We have taken the captain of the Sea Scourge.'

'Taken the captain of the Sea Scourge? We know that he was reported cruising about in these latitudes, lying in wait for East Indiamen; but we have seen nothing of him; there was no Sea Scourge, no any other ship in sight when we anchored here, or when we came ashore.'

'And yet we have the notorious Sea Rover.'

'Spear?'

'Yes, Spear.'

'Bosh, man, you are jesting with us. You

leaned—that there had been another ship.'

'Yes, I remember.'

'That other ship was the Sea Scourge, driven out of her course by a furious gale. She came into our cove sailing under the rebel flag, which greatly perplexed us, as we had never seen or heard of it.'

'Yes? Well?' exclaimed the captain and several of the officers, listening eagerly.

'The captain landed here; brought us the first news of the war which, you may judge, much astonished and grieved us. He proclaimed himself a Confederate privateer, sailing under letters of marque from his government. He drank more brandy than was good for him, and went to sleep on the floor. In the afternoon his crew mutinied, deposed him from his command, put another man in his place, and sailed without him.'

'Good! Where did you say the fellow is now?'

'On this Island! In this house! He has been here ever since he was abandoned by his ship, of course. He is now ready to give himself up to you. You will treat him, I hope, as a prisoner of war.'

'That as it may be. I must see and question the fellow first,' said the Captain of the Xyphias.

Justin went out and returned, accompanied by Spear.

CHAPTER XVLII.

VICTORY.

Thus far our fortunes keep an onward course,
And we are graced with wreaths of victory.
—*Shakespeare.*

Plumed victory
Is truly painted with a cheerful look
Equally distant from ground insolence
And false humility.
—*Massinger.*

As soon as the crew of the Sea Scourge had surrendered, Captain Yetsom ordered them below and closed the hatches.

Then he detailed a small party of his own men and placed them under the command of Midshipman Bestor, to take charge of the prize, and ordered the others to their own ship.

As soon as he regained the deck of the Xyphias he sent for Lieutenant Ethel, and passed down into his cabin.

A strange weakness, dizziness and dimness of sight was creeping over him.

'Why, what is this?' he said to himself. 'It cannot be from that scratch! Bosh! I must get a glass of brandy.'

But in the act of crossing to his locker, he turned giddy, reeled, grasped at the [illegible] ly at any time to be visited heavily upon the perpetrators. And Mr. Ethel felt that should the crew of the Xyphias, in their present state of excitement, hear of their captain's danger, no one could be answerable for the lives of the prisoners on the Sea Scourge. So he gave the order in the ambiguous words quoted. And that order was passed precisely as it was given.

Ethel, for his part, rushed back to the side of the captain and began rapidly to unbutton his coat and vest. When he came to his under-clothing he found it crimson with blood, that had flowed so freely as even partially to fill the space between his top-boots and the limbs they covered.

The young lieutenant groaned in anguish of spirit, for he loved his captain as man seldom loves man.

The surgeon now came down the companion ladder. Seeing Ethel bending over the prostrate form of the captain and tearing away the blood-stained clothing, he rushed forward, exclaiming:

'What's all this? What's the matter? The captain wounded? Good Lord! he is one clot of blood! In Heaven's name, sir, why was I not told before?'

'I came in here but a moment ago and found him lying flat on his face,' replied the young man, in a heart-broken voice. 'Oh, doctor, is he dying?'

[illegible] each them as your Federal armies are doing? I did but on the sea what you did upon the land.'

'But after taking these merchantmen, you have massacred the crews and burnt the ships?'

'Never.'

'What have you done with them, then?'

'Bonded them and sent them home. If I ever have done otherwise, convict me of the crime of piracy, and sentence me to suffer its penalty. But until you can do that, treat me as a prisoner of war.'

'I shall treat you as a prisoner of war until we reach one of our own ports. There I shall deliver you over to the authorities, to be dealt with according to law. For your own sake, I hope it will appear that you have done no worse than you say. Lieutenant Ethel, take charge of this prisoner, and see him safely on board the ship,' said Captain Yetsom, re-seating himself.

The young officer advanced to obey the order, but Mr. Rosenthal intervened by stooping and saying to the captain:

'As you receive this officer in the character of a prisoner of war, I would like to ask him to join us at dinner, if you have no objection.'

'None in the world. Lieutenant, I [illegible] [illegible] was engaged in packing up and sending off his stores of fresh provisions to the ship. And the jolly boat plied all day long between the ship and shore to transport them.

Britomarte and Judith were employed in packing such clothing, books and household effects as they meant to take with them from the Island.

It had been determined in solemn consultation between the three that some of the live stock, some of the household furniture, and even some of the provisions—such as would be likely to keep for a length of time—should be left on the Island, in case any other ship should be wrecked upon its rocks, or any other passengers cast away upon its desolate shores.

In the fields they turned loose a few sheep and pigs and fowls.

They would have left Crummie the cow, too, but that Judith raised such a howl as never had been heard from her before, not even on the occasion of the shipwreck; and vowed that to leave Crummie behind would break her heart entirely.

To comfort Judith, and, above all, to stop her deafening howls, Britomarte promised that Crummie should go. And Britomarte's promise was her bond; and, moreover, her word was law.

And besides, the table-loving [illegible] of

The doctor got down upon his knees and made a very careful examination, and then he lifted his head and exclaimed:

'Thank Heaven! it is not near so bad as I had expected to find it. It is an ugly flesh wound at worst, and he'll weather it. You see, a pistol ball had entered here on his right side and furrowed its way clear across the chest, and come out under the left arm. No wonder he bled so much. But he could bear it. He could bear it.'

While the doctor spoke he lost no time; he was busy cutting long, slim strips of sticking-plaster, with which he gradually brought the ragged edges of the wound together, securing them by laying the strips at right angles with the length of the wound, and then carefully bandaging.

When this was done, with young Ethel's assistance he washed his patient thoroughly put fresh clothes on him and laid him on the bed.

Lastly, the doctor administered restoratives, that soon brought the captain to himself.

On recovering his consciousness, Captain Yetsom looked languidly around, and finding himself upon his bed, and seeing Doctor Brown and Lieutenant Ethel bending anxiously over him, he feebly inquired;

[illegible] his throw. But he immediately fell back from faintness.

'Ah, ha!' said the doctor. 'Try that again, my lad, will you? Now see here, captain, you are the commander of the ship; but I am the commander of you just at present, and I command you to keep still. And it depends upon your obedience to my commands whether you continue to command your ship, or whether you go on a visit to Davy Jones, with a pair of thirty-two pounders to your head and your heels.'

While the doctor spoke the captain had been contemplating his own hands, so rough and ruddy a few hours ago, so white and waxen now.

'Je-hos-o-phat, King of the Jews!' he faintly exclaimed; 'can these be my hands?'

'Yes! and you've got a face to match 'em! Do they look like wielding, a cutlass, or cocking a revolver? Or even like holding a speaking trumpet to your lips, supposing those white lips of yours strong enough to speak through it? Come, captain, be a good child for once, and keep quiet since you can do no otherwise.'

The captain writhed and frowned. Of all things he abhorred to lie inactive in bed at this crisis. But he recognized the truth of doctor's words, and he submitted to necessity; the more readily because he felt that

spent in repairing the injuries of the ship and transporting the stores from the island.

The captain of the Xyphias thought the ship would be ready to sail on the following Monday.

When Justin heard this, he invited the captain and all the officers to come and spend Sunday—the last Sunday and the last day on the island—at his house, to hold Divine Service there.

And early on Sunday morning, the parlour, now dismantled of half its furniture, [illegible] converted into a temporary chapel, and [illegible] were sung and prayers said and [illegible] both in the morning and [illegible]. The sermon in the morning [illegible] preached by the ship's chaplain; [illegible] the afternoon by Mr. Rosenthal; and the officers and the crew attended both services, and the captain of the Xyphias slept comfortably in his seat through both sermons; but let this be said for him—that he would not have slept, or even winked, during a sea-fight, though it had lasted day and night.

When the afternoon service was over, the crew and some of the officers returned to the ship; but the captain and others remained and spent the evening, and only left at a late hour.

falling fast.

Judith howled and lifted up her voice in lamentations.

'Sure, I said it! Sure, I knew it! Sure I felt it all in my bones, so I did! That as soon as we got decently to house-keeping, and [illegible] the place itself, and got to love [illegible] be torn away from it. Och [illegible] never [illegible] beautiful pla[illegible] sit under the lovely palm trees that sheltered me from the hot sun like the best iv umbrellas! Nor ate the swate ripe cosy nuts that melted like cream chase in me mouth. Ow-oo! Och-hone, the day! Oh, me jewel iv an island! Oh, me darlint iv an island! Oh, me little angel iv an island! Shall meself never see your swate face again! Ow-oo! Ow-oo!'

And Judith dropped down upon the ground, threw her apron over her head, swayed her body backward and forward, and bayed the moon, or rather the stars, as there happened to be no moon at hand.

Justin and Britomarte let her howl a long time, and indeed until it was time for them to descend the mountain, and then Justin interfered.

'Come, Judith, be reasonable, my good girl! We all feel a little sad at the thought of leaving the place that has sheltered us so long. But, upon the whole, we are all glad

fight. But thank God!—oh, forever and forever thank God that this white hand has been raised only to save and to heal, and not to slay!'

His voice, his whole frame so shook with emotion as he uttered these last words, that she caught the contagion and dropped her head upon his shoulder and burst into tears. He drew her closer to his heart and leaned over her.

The rough sailors passing near saw all this, but they had long ago set this pair down as betrothed lovers, and their only feeling was one of sympathy with them.

'By mammy!' said one grey old sea-dog as he passed, 'if I could find a gal so spunky as that one, I'd spark her myself, old as I am!'

Justin bent over Britomarte, delicately soothing her more by looks and touch than by words. At last he said—

'Do you know—can you imagine, dearest, how deeply, doubly grateful I am to Divine Providence that it is to you I owe my life? A good gift is always precious, but more precious from those we love, and most precious from the one we love most!'

'Brother Justin,' she said, raising her head and smiling through her tears, 'do not make more of this matter than it really is. That sentiment was quite unworthy of the mighty champion of the Xyphias, who carried terror into the hearts of the Sea Scourgers. Devote your life to God and to His suffering humanity, and leave me to do the same.'

And she was about to leave him to return to her wounded in the cockpit, when something in his aspect, that was not sentiment, or passion, or anything like either, alarmed her.

'Justin—brother! how ill you look! What is the matter? Is it possible that you are wounded?' she breathlessly demanded.

'I am fatigued, dear sister; do not disturb yourself. But where is Judith? I have not seen that warlike heroine for some time, though she was a brave volunteer for any emergency. Is she killed, wounded, or taken prisoner?' laughingly inquired Justin.

Britomarte also laughed as she replied:

'Poor Judith! If her nerves had been as firm as her will was good, no doubt she would have kept her promise. But at the sound of the first gun her wits left her; at the second, she buried herself, head and ears, in the blankets of her berth; and—the last I saw of her, she was flying down, making for some unknown depths of the

entered it her sacred duty to give the island its dose of grieving. So she howled and wept, partly from real sorrow, and partly for consistency sake. And she secretly censured Justin and Britomarte for not howling and weeping with her. They descended the mountain and visited the grotto that had been their first dwelling place, and where Judith went through a second doleful ceremony of howling, and then timidly looked into the hole that had been their first kitchen, and where Judith repeated her contentious performance. In a word, this accompaniment of howling attended them in all their farewell visits to favourite spots, and it had this good effect: in its utter ludicrousness it counteracted the feelings of sorrow with which Justin and Britomarte were bidding farewell to long familiar places.

It was past midnight when at length they returned to their home.

Justin offered up a short but fervent evening worship, and then they separated and retired to rest.

And though this was their last night on the lonely island that they might never expect to re-visit again, and they were on the eve of embarking for their dear native land, and thoughts and feelings were busy alike with tender regrets and joyful anticipations, yet—in consequence of the bodily fatigue they had endured that day, they fell

determined not to disturb them, but to let them have their sleep out.

He had not sat long, however, before the door quickly opened and the two women entered, looking much surprised, and even ashamed, to see all the morning's work done, and all things ready for them.

'Oh, Justin, why did you not call us?' exclaimed Britomarte, regretfully.

'Because, dear sister, I am a Mohammedan in my religious scruples against awakening a sleeper. And besides, I wished you to take the rest you so much needed,' said Justin, cheerfully.

'But you have done all our work!'

'I hope I have done it well. I doubt, though, in regard to the eggs. Perhaps I ought not to have put them on to boil until you made your appearance.'

'Troth,' said Judith, examining the articles in question, 'they are as hard and as cowld as stones!'

'Put them on the fire and warm them over again, Judith. It will take but a few minutes,' laughed Justin.

'Lord kape us! Warm eggs over again! That's all a man knows about cookin'! That the Lord may make yer!' said Judith, looking at him with pity of his ignorance.

'Well, at any rate, you can boil the fresh eggs,' said Justin.

'And see,' said Miss Conyers, 'how much men know of cooking, Judith. What can be more delicate than this toast, or nicer than this ham, or richer than this coffee?'

'Thrue for ye, ma'am. I'm not saying to the conthrairy. But that reminds me he has not made me a dhrop iv tay.'

'Well, Judith, little as I know of cooking, I know that tea must not be made until it is to be drank,' said Justin.

'Lord bless ye! Did ye know that mush?. I, shouldn't wonder if yer knowed how to salt potatoes,' replied Judith, as she set her tea to draw.

'Come,' urged Justin, 'we will lose no more time in talking, but get our breakfast. The boat will be waiting for us.'

And Judith put the breakfast on the table, and Britomarte and Justin sat down.

'The boxes are gone, I see, Justin,' said Miss Conyers, as she poured out the coffee.

'Every one except the last box; that is, of course, to come out of your chamber, containing your toilet conveniences, and that can go with us,' he replied.

When breakfast was over they went to work at their final preparations for departure.

I said that they intended to leave the house with a portion of the furniture, clothing and books, for the benefit of any future shipwrecked sufferers who might possibly be cast away upon the island.

So Britomarte went into the bed-room, and made up the beds, and tidied the washstands, and set the chairs straight and closed the windows, and fastened the doors.

And while she was doing that, Judith washed up all the crockery ware and cooking utensils, and put them away in the cupboards, and then she cleaned up the kitchen, and put out the fire and shut the windows and doors.

In the meantime, Justin went into the parlour and set the chairs, tables, lamps and vases straight, and laid a Bible, a hymn-book, an old copy of Shakespeare, and an old almanac, a slate-pencil, and some paper, pens and ink upon the book shelves. Then he fastened the windows and doors.

Finally, the three friends, having completed their work, met in the front passage.

'Troth,' said Judith, 'whoever comes afther us can't say as we're not good housekeepers; for sure they'll find everything convanient to their hands, as they will.'

No one answered the girl. But Justin, with a grave face, summoned the two women to his side, and then, reverently lifting his hat, returned thanks to Divine Providence for their long preservation on the desert island, and for their present happy deliverance, and invoked His blessing on the isle they were leaving, that it might yet become the cultivated and populous habitation of civilised and Christian men, and on their own coming voyage, that it might have a prosperous course and happy end.

And then the three went out of the house, closing the front door behind them, and taking their way to the beach, followed by the faithful little dog. Justin carried on his shoulder the last box, which came out of Britomarte's room, filled with towels, combs, brushes, etc.

Down on the strand they found the boat waiting for them under the command of Lieutenant Ethel, who, to do them honour, had come in person to take them on board.

Crummie was already in the boat, to which she had been enticed by Judith's old device of a pail of 'warrum male and wather.'

And now, with her nose in that delicious mess, she remained quiet enough while the boat was still.

Lieutenant Ethel stepped on shore, bowed profoundly to Britomarte, and held out his hands to Mr. Rosenthal, with a hearty

'Good morning.'

'I hope we have not kept you waiting,' said Justin.

'Not a moment. We have only just got Mistress Could in here,' laughed the young man, pointing to Crummie.

They all then got into the boat.

Judith went immediately and stood by the head of the dog, with her hand on the creature's neck, ready to soothe and control her in case she should become frightened and restive when the boat should begin to move.

But Crummie had seen too many ups and downs in this world to be disturbed by trifles, and so she made the passage to the ship with great composure.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE CRUISE.

Speak pilot of the storm-tossed bark,
May I thy perils share?
—Oh, landsmen, there are fearful seas,
The brave alone may dare!
—Nay, ruler of the rebel deep,
What matters wind or wave?
The rocks that wreck your reeling deck
Will leave me nought to save.
—*O. W. Holmes.*

The captain of the Xyphias stood on deck to receive his passengers.

The deck was a scene of great bustle, with the seamen getting ready to make sail. Some were weighing anchor, some loosing the topsails and courses, and others hauling down the ropes.

Through the crowd the captain led his passengers to the head of the gang ladder, and took them down below to the gun-deck where his own quarters were situated, and he assigned them berths in his own cabin.

Britomarte and her attendant had a state-room to themselves, and Justin had a share in the captain's state-room. It appeared from all this that they were to be received as the captain's own guests, and have seats at his private table as well as berths in his cabin.

Having introduced his guests to their new quarters, the captain returned to his post on deck. And the noise of getting under way roared and thundered overhead.

Britomarte and Judith went into their state-room to inspect it and lay aside the small parcels that they had brought from the house in their hands.

And then Britomarte asked Justin to attend them up on deck that they might watch their island as long as it should continue in sight.

They went up and stood in the stern of the ship, leaning over the taff-rail, and looking upon the Island, until the Xyphias began to leave the tarn, and then as the wind filled her canvas, to sail away for the open sea. They watched the lonely isle as it gradually receded from their sight, until palm trees, rocks and caverns were mingled in one undistinguishable mass of colour—they watched it until it dropped lower and lower down towards the horizon—until its outline became confused with the boundaries of sky and sea—and then they turned away and Britomarte drew her veil to hide her fast falling tears.

When she lifted it again there was nothing around her but the lonely sea and sky.

The captain came to her side and spoke cheerfully:

'The cabin of a man-of-war is not exactly that of a first-class ocean steamer, Miss Conyers, nor was it designed especially with a view to the accommodation of ladies. Nevertheless, we are so happy to have a lady with us that we shall do all in our power to make you comfortable.'

'I am very sure you will, captain,' answered Britomarte.

'And this I will say for your encouragement. Although you came on board with the full knowledge that we are cruising about in quest of rebel privateers, with no prospect of going home for some time to come, and although you may think your chance of seeing your native country a very poor one, yet I can assure you that it is not so. We are extremely likely to fall in with homeward bound merchant vessels, by one of which you could take direct passage home.'

'Ah! Heaven send that we may!' exclaimed Britomarte.

'See now how anxious she is to get away from us—*before* she has tried us for one hour too,' said the captain turning to Justin, with the mock reproachful air.

'She has been an exile from home for more than two years,' gravely answered Justin.

'Ah! yes. Well we must send her home as soon as we can. And if we don't fall in with a homeward bound ship, we may capture a rebel privateer and send it home under the charge of one of the lieutenants, and send our fair passenger with her. In the meantime, we must try to make Miss Conyers as happy as possible here.'

The jolly captain's idea of making people happy was to give them much more than enough of the very best food. So he sent down to the steward and had a luncheon laid in his cabin, to which he invited his three passengers. Out of courtesy they accepted his invitation; but having breakfasted at eight, they could make but a poor pretence to lunch at eleven. At two they had a sumptuous dinner, at five they had tea, and at eight supper. And all this eating and drinking made such a hard day's work, that the captain's pampered passengers were glad to turn in at ten o'clock.

The next morning, to awake and remember that they had left the lonely Island forever, and were far away on the ocean again, with a prospect, though ever so remote, of once more reaching their native land, and greeting their old friends, was a sensation of strangely mingled pain and joy, such as it is seldom the fate of human beings to experience.

This second day of their voyage was a pleasanter one than the first, principally because the captain, having discovered the temperate habits of his passengers, did not insist upon their making five meals a day.

They were steering for Cape Town, where the captain hoped to anchor by the end of that current week.

'We may meet a homeward bound vessel there,' he said; 'if so, we will put you on board of her.'

'It is you who are now anxious to get rid of us, captain,' said Miss Conyers, archly.

And the jolly captain put on the air of a

very much injured man, and vowed that Miss Conyers did him great wrong.

The ship was constantly on the look-out for Rebel privateers, and kept a man at the mast-head day an night, relieving him every two hours. But night followed day, and day succeeded night, and still no sail of any sort was to be seen on all the lonely sea.

Nevertheless, this was one of the happiest periods that our three friends ever passed. The weather was charming, the sky clear, the sea calm, the wind light, and the ship flew on over the waters at the rate of ten knots an hour. The ship's captain and officers were all extremely pleasant companions, and unaffectedly glad to have these guests along with them to break the monotony of their sea life.

During the continuance of the fine weather, the three passengers spent every day on deck and every evening in the captain's cabin.

Usually the captain, the chaplain, Justin and Britomarte formed a party, and playing a rubber or two of whist.

Sometimes, to vary the evening's pastime, Miss Conyers would exercise her talent for dramatic reading, and on these latter occasions, all the officers that could be spared from the deck would be invited into the captain's cabin to receive their share of the entertainment.

Sometimes, also, Miss Conyers sang out for her friends. And this singing was perhaps the greatest treat she could give them. A woman's sweet voice carolling their favourite songs on the blue water was a novelty and a delight indeed.

Thus pleasantly passed the days until Saturday morning, when they made Table Mount. And on Saturday noon they anchored in Table Bay.

Justin and Britomarte went on shore to call upon their friends at Cape Town.

They went first to the South African College, but learned there that their old acquaintance, Professor Jack, had gone to Europe to collect certain rare scientific works for his library.

Then they went out to Silver Tree Villa to see their esteemed friends the Barneys.

They found the Reverend Doctor and his family at home and in good health, but immeasurably astonished and delighted to see Mr. Rosenthal and Miss Conyers, for they had heard of the wreck of the Sultana, and had supposed their young friends to have been lost.

And next it was the turn of Justin and Britomarte to be equally astonished and delighted, for they learned that the life-boat containing the missionary party, after drifting about the ocean for several days, had been picked up by a Dutch merchantman bound for the Cape of Good Hope, and all the passengers rescued, that the Ely's and the Bretons had remained guests at Silver Tree Grove for a month, during which subscriptions had been taken up in all the churches to raise a fund, for their relief, and at the end of which, being entirely refitted out, they had sailed in the East Indiaman Djalma for Calcutta, en route for their distant field of missionary labour, where in due time they had safely arrived.

Mrs. Barney was able to assure Miss Conyers that her friends were well and doing well, for she heard from them by every Indian mail.

Great was the surprise and joy of Justin and Britomarte on hearing this news.

'Then, after all, the crew of that boat must have relented and taken the two men on board,' said Justin.

'I suppose when Captain McKenzie refused to leave the ship he left room in the boat for one, and they managed to make room for the other,' observed Britomarte.

'It is as if they were given back to us from the dead,' said Justin.

'I am thinking of little Mrs. Ely's poor old father. I am so glad he is not left childless in his old age. He could not have heard of her safety before he could have heard of the shipwreck.'

'Yes.'

'What news this will be for Judith, by the way.'

'Yes. I can see her face now.'

'But Justin, which boat was her sweetheart in, do you know? If he was in the boat with the missionaries he was saved,' anxiously exclaimed Miss Conyers.

Justin reflected a moment and then answered:

'I do not know. I have been trying to recollect, but in vain. Heaven grant that he may have been saved, for the poor faithful girl's sake.'

They dined with the Barneys, but were obliged to decline all further hospitality, as the length of their ship's stay at Cape Town was very uncertain.

So they took an affectionate leave of their friends and returned on board the Xyphias in good time for the captain's early supper-table, which was spread with all the luxuries to be obtained at Cape Town.

'I have news of the Sea Scourge. She touched here on the day before yesterday, remained a few hours to get in wood and water and also to pick up a few seamen and

then she sailed,' said the captain, as they sat down to supper.

'Where?' eagerly inquired Justin.

'East and North. Going, no doubt, to meet returning East Indiamen from Calcutta. We must go in pursuit of her and lose no time about it either. So, Mr. Rosenthal, we sail with the first tide to-morrow.'

'I am rejoiced to hear it,' said Justin.

'I have caused inquiries to be made and find that there are no homeward bound ships in the harbour. So this young lady, I am selfishly glad to know, has no option but to go on with us for the present,' added the captain.

'Unless she prefers to accept the hospitality tendered her by the Barneys; in which case she can remain at Silver Tree Villa, and wait for a homeward bound ship. What do you say, Miss Conyers?' inquired Justin, turning towards her.

'I say that, with the captain's kind permission, I will stay where I am,' replied Britomarte.

And so that matter was settled.

But it was not until Miss Conyers found herself alone for a few moments, in her state-room with her companion, that she told Judith the joyful news about the rescue and preservation of the missionary party.

The effect upon the Irish girl was very different from that which Britomarte had anticipated.

'That I nivir may sin,' cried Judith. 'And I've been wearing out their clothes all this time!'

'Oh, Judith, don't think of their clothes, but of their rescued lives, and thank Heaven for their preservation!' said Miss Conyers.

'And thin to think that all me harrd graiving wint for nothing. So much lost labour intirely,' complained Judith.

'Oh, girl, girl, it seems to me that you are sorry they were saved,' said Miss Conyers.

'D.vil a bit iv me is sorry they were saved. But it's sorry I am to me heart's core for wearing out all their good clothes, let alone losing me labour wid graving for thim. Faix meself wishes people would be raisonable and when they're gwine to live would let us know it and not be fooling.'

'Judith, I often think that there are times and seasons when you are *non compos mentis*.'

'Troth meself don't see what the compass has got to do wid it. But sure that Indy shawl will nivir do to go on her shoulders agin. What wid the sun and the rain and the salt say wather itself, it's spilt entirely.'

Britomarte gave it up. She longed to know whether Judith's lover had been on the boat with the missionaries, but she forbore to enquire of Judith, who alone could tell her. And she reasoned that if Fore-top Tom had been on the rescued life-boat Judith would have known it, and would have manifested more joy at its preservation; and if he had not been there, he must have been lost in the other one; and the bringing up of his name would be useless as well as cruel.

Subsequently in the cabin Britomarte said to Justin—'I feel quite sure that Judith's Tom was not in the boat that was saved; for when I spoke of it she never mentioned his name.'

'I'm sorry for that. Then he must have been in the boat with yourself and Judith and her father, as was natural, as he belonged to the same party. Can you not recollect?' inquired Mr. Rosenthal.

'Oh, Justin! I was so stunned with sorrow at leaving you alone on the wreck, that I saw nothing around me. I only watched the wreck until it dropped down behind the horizon out of sight, and then I closed my eyes and never wished to open them again,' she answered.

'My dearest Britomarte!'

'There! that will do, Justin. Don't let us grow sentimental.'

'The weather promises to be fine,' said the captain, coming down the companion ladder.

'Let us hope the weather will keep its promise!' answered Justin, a little confusedly, for he fancied that the captain's words had a double meaning.

They played their rubber of whist as usual and then retired to rest.

CHAPTER XLV.

THE CHASE.

Ye sailors on the mighty deep,
Your sacred oaths we bid you keep,
We bid you faithful stand;
The laws your fathers writ in blood,
The flag they bore through flame and flood,
Keep with true heart and hand!

—*Anon.*

With the first tide the next morning the ship sailed.

The weather kept its promise and was very fine.

The ship steered north-east, flying before a fresh wind at the rate of ten or eleven knots an hour.

And all day long our passengers lounged upon the deck, reading, promenading or chatting, and all the evening they played whist in the captain's cabin.

And day and night the captain kept a man at the mast-head on the lookout, and relieved him every two hours, that his vigilance might not slacken.

But days and nights went by and there was no sign of the Sea Scourge, or any other ship on all the lonely sea.

The officers as well as the crew became impatient.

'Here we have been cruising for six months since we sailed from New York and we haven't fallen in with a rebel privateer, nor had the least prospect of an engagement. The only adventure we have had was the rescuing of the shipwrecked party on that island.'

Such was the chief burden of the various complaints made by officers and men alike.

The captain only was contented.

'We shall overhaul the pirate sooner or later. When we do, see that you do your duty,' he said.

And he walked the quarter-deck all day and played whist in the cabin all night, or nearly so. And day and night kept his man at the mast-head on the lookout, with orders to keep his eyes peeled; and relieved him every two hours that he might not have occasion to wink on his watch. And so many days and nights passed and still there was no sign of the Sea Scourge or any other ship on all the lonely sea. And the officers and crew were almost desperate, but too well disciplined to break out.

At length one evening when the tropical full moon and great stars made all the sky and sea almost as bright as day, and the officers off duty were lounging on the deck, and the captain and his party were playing whist in the cabin, there came a cry from the man at the mast-head:

'Sail ho!'

It roused the officers on deck like the blast of a trumpet does the war-horse. They 'sniffed the battle afar off.'

It startled all the whist players in the cabin, except the phlegmatic captain, who went on continuing his points:

'Two by tricks and two by honours! and five before! We're nine to their nine, Miss Conyers. And now all depends upon the odd trick. So we must look sharp!—I knew we should overhaul her at last! Partner, it's my deal.'

But no one listened to the captain. Every one was straining their ears to catch the voices from the deck.

'Sail ho!'

The cry rung through the night air like an alarum.

'Where away?' called the officer of the forward watch.

'About three points off our weather bows.'

'What do you make of her?'

'Can't make her out yet.'

While this bawling was going on aloft, the captain of the ship sat quietly over his rubber of whist.

Presently Lieutenant Ethel came below, touched his cap, and said:

'If you please, sir, we have made a strange sail.'

'What do you make of her?' inquired the captain, without ceasing to deal his cards.

'We can make nothing of her as yet, except that she appears to have seen us and is running away.'

'That proves her to be the Sea Scourge, or some other pirate! Clap on the sail we can carry, and chase!—— Diamonds! Parson, it is your lead, and we are waiting for you. Miss Conyers look sharp. We are playing for the odd trick,' said the captain, as he turned up the trump and sorted his cards.

The young lieutenant went on deck with his orders. And soon the ship flew under the pressure of her sails.

The captain went on with his game, and played well; and as none of his excited companions could give sufficient attention to the business in hand fairly to compete with him, he won the odd trick.

'We've beat them in the rub, Miss Conyers. Shall we try to beat them in another one?' inquired the captain, as he gathered up the cards.

'Oh no! pray don't! let us go up on deck, and look after the chase!' eagerly urged Britomarte.

'You!' exclaimed the captain, in laughing astonishment.

'Yes, I!' answered Britomarte, as her eyes widened and brightened.

'Lord bless my soul alive, here is a young lady as eager for the fray as any of us!' laughed the captain. 'I'll warrant you, when you get back to your native country, if the war is not over, to take an active part in it.'

'That I shall!' answered Britomarte, emphatically. And all the while she looked her eager impatience to get upon the deck.

'There is no necessity for haste, my dear young lady. We shall see nothing when we get there!—except what we have seen for so many days and nights—an expanse of sea and sky!' laughed the captain.

'But the strange sail?' eagerly questioned our virago.

'Aye, the strange sail! You'll not see her, at all events! The men have made her out only through their glasses! She is miles

away! and we shall not overhaul her before morning,' said the captain.

'And in the morning!' aspirated Britomarte, breathing fiercely and glancing fire.

'Yes, in the morning. You will probably see a disturbance of the peace! Humph! you have been in a hurricane, suffered shipwreck, and now you are to be in a sea-fight! It seems you are destined to prove all the perils of the deep!'

'But the sea-fight——!'

'Heavens! how your eyes burn, young lady! You would like to be at one of the guns to-morrow, would you not?'

'That I would!' exclaimed the amazon.

And they went up on deck.

All was suppressed excitement there.

'Well, Mr. Ethel, are we gaining on the chase?' inquired the captain of his second officer, his first one being ill in his hammock.

'No, sir; losing a little,' replied the young man, touching his cap.

'The demon! But these privateers are famous sea running horses!—Set the to'gallant stu'ns'ls!'

The order was passed and executed.

And the ship leaped forward like a steed that feels the spur, and bounded onward through the waters, sending the foam flying in showers of phosphoric sparks each side her bowsprit.

Britomarte reeled and tottered and clung to Justin's arm to steady her steps, for she could scarcely keep her feet for the violent motion of the ship that rolled as tremendously as she ran.

'Miss Conyers, take my advice and let me lead you below,' said Justin.

'Thanks,' she replied. And he assisted her down into the cabin.

Leaving her there with Judith, he returned on deck and rejoined the captain.

'Mr. Ethel! See if we are gaining on the chase,' said Captain Yetsom, after a few minutes had elapsed.

'Ay, ay, sir!' replied the young lieutenant. And walking forward a few paces, he sang out:

'Mast-head!'

'Ay, ay, sir!' bawled the man on the lookout.

'Are we gaining on the chase?'

'Ay, ay, sir; but gradually. We won't overhaul her at this rate before morning.'

'That will do,' said the captain, when the young officer made his report. 'Keep her so. I do not care to overhaul her until daylight.'

And he set the watch and went below, and turned in for a short nap, leaving Lieutenant Ethel to manage the ship.

Justin stayed on deck a little while longer, and then followed the captain's example.

But none of them except the phlegmatic captain rested very well that night. The thought that they were chasing a privateer, whom they would probably engage in battle next morning, was not likely to rock them to sleep.

Britomarte certainly never closed her eyes; she was kept awake no less by her own excitement than by the 'tireless tongue' of Judith, who talked of nothing but the coming fight and the share she would like to take in it.

'Sure meself hopes they'll find something for me to do in it! Troth, if they'd put me to one iv the big guns, I could fire it off wid the best iv them. And if they'd not trust me to do that same, I could hand patridges as well as the powdy monkeys thimselves!'

'Cartridges, Judith,' said Miss Conyers.

'Sure that's what I'm maning. And troth I'll find something to do in it, or me name's not Judy Riordan.'

'I am glad and proud to see so much spirit in a sister woman, Judith, whether you find an opportunity of exercising it or not,' said Miss Conyers.

At which Judith was so delighted that she went off into another fit of boasting more extravagant than the first.

To have heard Judith talk then, you would have imagined her to be Boadicea, Joan of Arc and Moll Pitcher rolled into one.

So passed the night in the cabin.

Just before the dawn of day, Lieutenant Ethel came below to the captain and reported the chase within range of their lee-bow gun.

'Fire a blank cartridge into her,' said the captain, immediately turning out.

Britomarte and Judith overheard every word of this short interview. And Judith clapped her hands for joy, exclaiming—

'Now they're going to begin. Sure meself is happy as Paddy a Donnybrook Fair. An, oh! that I was up on deck wid the gintlemen! Wouldn't I—'

'Boom—m—me!' thundered the cannon over the sea, with a report that shook the ship.

With a violent bound Judith leaped up, clapped her hands to her ears, and, shaking and screaming with the extremity of terror, hid her head in Britomarte's lap.

'Why, what's the matter, Judith?' inquired Miss Conyers, as the sound rolled away. 'Is this your heroism?'

'S'int Peter and all the Holy Apostles! Mother Mary and all the blissid virgins!' gasped the panic-stricken girl.

'Boom-m-me!' roared an answering gun from the chase.

'Ow-o-o!' screeched Judith, burying her head in Britomarte's lap; 'kiver me up! kiver me up! I'm kilt entirely!'

But Miss Conyers started up, threw the girl off her knees, hurried on her clothes and hastened out into the cabin, where she met Justin leaving his state-room.

'The action has commenced!' exclaimed Britomarte.

'Yes, dearest one. Stay where you are, I beseech you. You can do no good on deck,' urged Justin.

'If I can do no good, I can at least risk my life with the others,' persisted Britomarte.

'But to what end? Britomarte, you will not only do no good by going on deck, but you will do much harm by being in everybody's way,' said Justin, bluntly.

She looked intently in his face to see if he spoke in earnest, before she answered.

'If that is so, I will stay here. But oh, how unwillingly.'

And she sat down, only half resigned to her inactivity, and meditated how she could change it into good service.

While they spoke, another shot was exchanged between the ships.

Justin hurried up on deck.

Everything there was in admirable order. None of the confusion that too often precedes an engagement appeared.

The deck was cleared for action.

The men were all at their quarters, the officers at their posts.

The captain was standing on the quarter deck, levelling his glass at the chase, which was, moreover, in full sight, about two miles ahead.

The firing ceased for the time being.

'What is the meaning of this lull, captain?' respectfully inquired Justin Rosenthal, coming to the side of Captain Yetsom.

Sailors will swear, more is the pity, and Captain Yetsom, dropping the telescope to his side, blew off a tremendous oath, under the impression that he had a sufficient provocation to do so, and then he added—

'We are on a false scent, sir. We have been chasing an English ship.'

'Are you certain?' doubtingly inquired Justin.

'Humph! These infernal pirates sometimes show false colours. That is what has happened, Mr. Rosenthal. When I came up on deck I found her within good range of our lee-bow chaser. I ran up the stars and stripes and sent a blank cartridge into her by way of a visiting card. She returned the compliment by firing a salute from her stern-chaser; but did not show her colours, and did not cease to run.'

'And then?'

'I sent a more urgent message to her in the form of a round shot from our lee-bow chaser. She returned the fire in kind and hoisted the English Union Jack.'

'But didn't heave to?'

'No, nor cease to run away from us. Whatever she does, she does not cease to run.'

'But an English ship, or an honest ship, scarcely would do that?'

'Scarcely. And that is what makes the affair doubtful and awkward. If she is an English ship we have no business to pursue her; but if she is a rebel privateer sailing under English colours we must take her.'

While the captain spoke, Mr. Rosenthal had been attentively regarding the chase. Now he said—

'The longer I look at that ship, the more familiar she seems to me. Will you lend me your telescope, captain?'

Captain Yetsom handed the glass and waited the result of Justin's inspection.

Justin pointed the instrument and took deliberate sight at the chase. He viewed it attentively for a minute and then returned the telescope to the owner, saying quietly—

'You are not on a false scent, captain.'

'Eh? What do you make of her?'

'The Sea Scourge.'

'Are you quite certain?'

'Quite. I cannot be mistaken. Indeed, I recognised her by naked eye from her general appearance. And when I brought the glass to bear upon her, I knew her also by individual marks.'

The captain of the Xyphias waited to hear no more. He laid down his telescope, sprang upon the poop deck, and drew out his speaking trumpet.

As the men had scarcely taken their eyes off their captain during the fifteen minutes of suspense in which they stood idly at their quarters, there was no need to call their attention.

The captain put the speaking trumpet to his lips, and thundered forth the words:

'My lads!—The prize that we have been seeking, the Sea Scourge, is before us. And please heaven she shall be ours before night!'

Tremendous cheers from the seamen responded to the captain's pithy speech, and proved their good-will to the work before them, and their confidence of victory.

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE FLIGHT.

'Strike! till the last armed foe expires!
Strike for the altars and your fires!
Strike for the green graves of your sires!'
God and your native land!
They fought like brave men, long and well—
They piled that 'deck with foemen' slain—
They conquered!—*Halleck.*

'Stand to your guns, men!' thundered he captain of the Xyphias.

And the deafening cheers sank into silence, and the order was promptly obeyed.

'Mr. Ethel!'

The young lieutenant came quickly at the captain's call.

'Pass the order to fire at the enemy's mizzen mast. Strike it as low as possible; for the lower you carry it away the more unmanageable the Sea Scourge will become. The heavy press of sail she carries forward will then lift her stern high out of the water and render her less obedient to her helm.'

'Ay, ay, sir!' responded the cheerful voice of the young officer, as he touched his cap and went forward to see the order executed.

The gunner in charge of the lee bow chaser was an old and experienced one.

The lieutenant gave him the order, word for word, as he had received it from the captain.

'We'll try, sir,' said the veteran, with a confident smile and pat on the breech of his gun, which satisfied the lieutenant that the gunner knew his business. The gun was now ready. He sighted her, and gave the command—

'Fire!'

Out poured the deafening discharge, and two hundred pairs of eyes were tracking the course of the ball through the air, each in impatient suspense to see the effect.

It struck close under the stern of the enemy.

'A good shot! a capital shot!' exclaimed the captain. 'A little more elevation on your next, and you will splinter his mizzen mast!'

Meanwhile Lieutenant Ethel raised his telescope and took sight at the chase. And it seemed that the captain of the Sea Scourge, finding that his false colours did not protect him, and having a ball drop so close under his stern, concluded that he was known, and determined to fight the battle out under his true ones. Down fluttered St. George's Cross, and up flew the Stars and Bars. And the next instant his stern chaser answered the iron messenger from the Xyphias.

The shot plunged into the sea close on the weather quarter of our gallant ship, doing no other harm than copiously sprinkling the jolly tars on that side.

'A free shower bath in hot weather is a pleasant and a wholesome thing!' exclaimed a young midshipman, who had received his share of that blessing.

But another good fellow, a landsman recently shipped from Cape Town, who had been standing gaping and staring with mouth and eyes wide open, received a deluge on his face and chest, striking him with such a shock that he lost his balance and his reason at the same moment, and fell flat upon his back, rolling over and over, imagining that the ball had struck him, and that the water gurgling back from his throat was his own life-blood, and bawling at the top of his voice:

'I'm shot! I'm shot! My head's off! My head's off! Take me down! Take me down!'

Amid roars of laughter from his companions, an old salt caught up a pair of shell-hooks, similar in shape to fire-tongs, and reaching forward, brought the ends together over a piece of flesh under the fellow's pantaloons with an unmerciful squeeze.

The dead man sprang up with wonderful agility, and, amid piercing shrieks, bawled out:

'I'm shot again! I'm shot again! Take me down below. Take me down below!'

Such peals of laughter followed this, that the lad opened his eyes, looked about, came to his senses and realised his position.

At the captain's command he went forward and slunk out of sight.

The next shot from the Sea Scourge took off the head of the brave old salt, spinning it round and round until it struck the deck, while the headless body sank quivering down upon the very spot where but a moment before the form of the coward had rolled.

But—

'The coward dies many deaths,
The brave man dies but once.'

Shot after shot was now exchanged between the ships with little effect; the Xyphias all the while gradually drawing nearer the Sea Scourge, and the chase growing more exciting.

At length a lucky shot from the Xyphias struck the enemy's mizzen-mast, just

above the mizzen-top, and down came the wreck.

Cheers upon cheers went up from the crew of the Xyphias.

Yells of defiance answered them from the decks of the enemy.

Lieutenant Hall again levelled his glass at the chase.

The Sea Scourge still minded her helm, as her spanker and crochet were still standing and drawing. The wreck of her mizzen-mast was promptly cleared away. And she doggedly answered gun for gun, shot for shot, though the Xyphias was now gaining rapidly upon her, and her case was well nigh hopeless.

At last a shot from the Xyphias struck the taffrail of the enemy, close by the wheel, scattering the splinters in every direction. One struck the helmsman, driven to his very heart. In his death-agony and delirium, he clutched the spokes of the wheel with the grasp that could not be loosened; and he slowly sank windward to the deck, turning the wheel with him. The Sea Scourge, in obedience to her helm, rounded sharply to the wind.

Seeing his ship broaching to, the captain of the Sea Scourge ran aft, yelling:

'What d'ye mean by that, you—sea cook? Luff! Luff!'

There came no response from the helmsman; and indeed in the same instant that he ceased speaking the captain perceived that the man was past hearing. He reached the helm too late. The ship was already taken aback and lying directly across the course of the Xyphias, and not two cables' length from her. He gave the helm to a seaman near, and springing from the poop deck, yelled forth the order:

'Rake her with your port battery!'

Then issued forth a tremendous discharge that shook the privateer from mast-head to keel, so that she trembled like a living creature struck with palsy. Then he braced her yards and put her wheel hard down so as to bring her again upon her course.

Meanwhile from the deck of the Xyphias, Captain Yetsom, observing the privateer in the act of broaching to, first looked, expecting to see her haul down her colours. But as they continued to fly, he put his helm to clear the Xyphias from the raking fire that he foresaw would be poured into her from the port battery of the enemy.

But so quickly did the Sea Scourge broach to, that the Xyphias could not get away in time; and so she received the enemy's whole broadside obliquely over her lee bows, with disastrous effect.

The rear of the enemy, the mizzen of the falling timbers, and the shrieks of the wounded were appalling.

Many poor fellows lost their lives and many more their limbs.

But now above all the noise and confusion, the voice of Captain Yetsom rang out clearly and firmly:

'Man the starboard guns! Clew up the courses! And as we cross the privateer's bows, take good aim and pay her well for this!'

And before the Sea Scourge could veer round upon her course again, the Xyphias came across her bows. A long line of fire belched forth from the starboard guns, sending iron missiles crashing and tearing into the Sea Scourge and dealing death and destruction everywhere among her crew.

Here Justin's clear and ringing voice was heard high above all others in the cheers that rose heavenward from the deck of the Xyphias.

Again these cheers were answered with yells of defiance from the deck of the privateer, whose sails now began to fill rapidly, so that she quickly wore round.

This brought the ships opposite to each other.

And now commenced a murderous exchange of broadsides. Roar followed. Crash came upon crash. The shrieks of the wounded on both sides mingled with each other and with the cheers of their unhurt companions.

Justin was everywhere—inspiring the brave to still greater deeds of valour, encouraging the faint-hearted till they outrivalled the most heroic, helping all by precept and example, and serving at the guns where men had fallen, until relieved.

And now the foremast of the Sea Scourge was seen to totter and fall!

While the enemy was encumbered with this wreck, Captain Yetsom set his courses and shooting ahead, took up a raking position, from which he poured into the Sea Scourge a galling fire of grape and canister.

The privateer persistently returned the fire with her bow chasers, and promptly cleared her deck from the wreck of the foremast.

Captain Yetsom, seeing that with the indomitable courage of his countrymen she would sink before she would surrender, and seeing also that she was manœuvring to get into position again, determined to carry her by the board.

He stood off for a short time and gathered his officers and men about him and said:

'That privateer is well fought. Her com-

mander will go to the bottom with his colours flying, rather than haul them down. He cannot have many men remaining fit for duty. So, to save the lives of my men, as well as that ship and her crew, I am resolved, by the help of the Lord, to carry her by the board.'

This announcement was received with tremendous cheers.

'Enough! To your quarters, men!' thundered the captain.

The order was immediately obeyed.

'Mr. Ethel!'

The young lieutenant sprang to his captain's side.

'Get ready the boarding party.'

Ethel sprang to execute his order.

Captain Yetmom then put his ship to the about and as she came in collision with the Sea Scourge, poured into the enemy a broadside from her port battery, and then, cutlass in hand, leaped on board, followed by Justin and the whole boarding party.

Here they were met by a set of men, few in number, but desperate in resolution, and a terrible conflict ensued. Foremost among the boarding party might have been seen the tall form of Justin, cheering on the men and striking good blows for the flag he loved so well.

In the meantime, what was Britomarte doing? Where Justin had left her, she had sat studying what she might do to help the good cause. Suddenly she found out her mission.

'There will be wounded men,' she said, 'and no one to attend to them in the excitement of the action.'

And she arose and op ned her trunks and boxes, and took from them all the soft old linen she could find, and sat down to tear it into bandages and having done that, she began to pick the shreds that were left into lint.

While Britomarte was engaged in this humane work, her panic-stricken companion lay in one of the berths, with her head under the cover, trying to deafen herself to the sound of the battle.

When the shrieks and groans of the wounded and dying began to mingle with the roar of the cannon and the crash of timbers, then Britomarte gathered up her linen bandages and lint and put them in a little basket with a pair of scissors, a flat knife and needles and thread, and with the basket on her arms, she went on deck.

Everybody was too busy there to see or stop her.

Through the black and sulphurous smoke, through pools of blood, between dead bodies, headless of the cannon balls that tore crashing past her, she made her way to that part of the deck where the ship's surgeon stood among the wounded, having them carefully carried below.

'Doctor, I have come to take care of these brave fellows,' she said, pausing at his side.

The surgeon looked at her in dismay.

'Young lady, for Heaven's sake——' he began; but she took the word from his lips.

'Doctor, for Heaven's sake forget that I am a "young lady," and look upon me only as a human being, able and willing to be useful!' she said.

'Boom-oom-me! crash! splash!' came a cannon ball from the Sea Scourge, tearing its way over their heads and dropping into the sea before them.

Britomarte stood like a statue, absolutely unshaken by the tremendous shock.

'Were you not frightened?' asked the doctor, in amazement.

'No; why should I be?' she coolly demanded.

'Nay, why should you not be?'

'In the first place, because I have no fear of death; in the second, because I have no great love of life. If I could feel fear, I should rush to the very front of danger to cure myself of the weakness.'

'I believe you would. You are formed of the metal of which heroes are made!'

'Let me help you,' said Britomarte, feeling impatient of his praise, and pointing to the basket of linen bandages and lint that she carried in her hand.

'Well, my child, you can help me, and you may. And at least you had better be down below with me binding up the wounds, than up on deck with the gunners helping to make them, as I think was your first aspiration,' replied the doctor.

'Yes,' said Britomarte, 'I should like to serve at one of the guns, but since I am not permitted to do so, I am willing to be useful in any other way. And you will find that I shall not dress our brave sailor's wounds any the less tenderly because I should prefer to make wounds for other people to dress on the bodies of the foemen?'

And saying these words, she followed the doctor down into the cockpit, where the wounded lay, some in hammocks, some on sail cloth, and some on the naked planks.

And there her courage, her humanity, and above all, her divine purity, so impressed the ship's surgeon, that he did utterly forget that she was a young lady, and he made her as useful as if she had been a medical student.

At the surgeon's orders, with her sharp

scissors and steady hand she ripped up the sleeves of the sailors' wounded arms, or the trowsers of their wounded legs, with equal promptness. She cut sticking plasters into long slender slips, and watched the doctor to see how he brought the gaping lips of more flesh wounds together, and closed them by laying across them, at right angles, these delicate strips of plaster, and then bandaged them up with linen.

She watched him perform this simple operation once. And then she assured him that she could do that as well as he could. And after that, while the surgeon attended to the more serious cases —probing wounds, extracting balls, and even amputating limbs—Britomarte closed and bandaged all the simple flesh wounds with a skill equal to that of the surgeon himself, and with a tenderness that drew from her rough patients many thanks and blessings.

And all this time the roar of battle went on overhead and all around her. Occasionally a ball struck near.

At length, however, the cannonading ceased, and a noise and confusion of another sort was heard above—a mighty cheering and hurrahing and running to and fro.

'What does that mean?' exclaimed the doctor.

But nobody could answer him, and he was too busy with his wounded to go and see for himself.

Britomarte had dressed the last wound of her last patient, and was holding a glass of brandy and water to his lips, for he was faint from the loss of blood, when another injured man—a young midshipman—was brought down.

And he reported that the captain had resolved to carry the enemy by the board.

'And that brave young fellow, Mr. Rosenthal, is foremost among the boarding party, fighting like another Paul Jones,' he added.

Britomarte listened breathlessly; but waited quietly until her patient had drained the glass that she held to his lips, and then she gently laid his head back, put down the glass, and rushed up on deck.

She reached that horrible deck—the scene of the late carnage. It was slippery with human gore, and spattered with brains, and littered with the splinters of shivered timbers and shreds of rent canvas, and fragments of broken weapons, and obstructed with dead bodies; and over all hung a sulphurous smoke of gunpowder that obscured the vision and blackened all the sails and rigging; and above all rang the clash of steel, the report of fire-arms, the screams of the wounded, and the yells and cheers of the combatants.

Through all these horrors Britomarte rushed to the starboard side of the ship, to which the Sea Scourge had been clewed up so closely that any one might easily pass from one to another.

On the deck of the Sea Scourge the battle was raging fiercely.

At first her senses all bewildered with horror, Britomarte perceived before her only a pandemonium of clanging, clashing, thundering, smoking, blazing, bleeding, screaming, yelling chaos! But presently her straining eyes made out the figure of Justin.

Conspicuous above all the rest by his great height and strength, and by the grandeur of his inspired countenance, which seemed as that of a god of war, and flinging himself wherever the fight was fiercest, he soon became the one target of the enemy, who struck at him from all sides.

Seeing him thus surrounded and desperately fighting, Britomarte clasped her hands, exclaiming:

'Oh, Heavenly Father protect him! In thine infinite mercy protect him!'

Then, no longer able to restrain herself, on seeing him in the most imminent peril, she caught up a cutlass from an arm-chest near, and crying:

'Oh, God of battles! give strength to my weak woman's arm this day!' she rushed over to the deck of the Sea Scourge in the midst of the hell of war, and stood by her lover's side.

Meantime Justin had singled out the pirate Captain Mulligan as his own; and also Mulligan, who was a brave man, had sought out the mighty champion of the Xyphias.

And at the moment in which our amazon, cutlass in hand, boarded the Sea Scourge, these two met; and Justin's other assailants fell back at a signal from their captain. And now, between the two, stroke followed stroke in rapid succession, each very adroitly parried. At length Mulligan lost his temper, and with that his presence of mind, and made a fierce lunge at his adversary's heart, which was quickly parried, and before he could come to his guard again, Justin brought down a crushing stroke upon his head that felled him to the deck.

But as he was in the act of levelling this fatal blow, he caught a glimpse of a seaman with a cocked pistol pointed close to his head. He thought that his time had come; he mentally prayed that his soul might be received in heaven; he heard the report of the pistol; felt the ball whizz through his

hair, and thanking the Lord for his preservation, he turned and saw—what? The seaman's arm resting on the cutlass with which Britomarte had struck it up!

To her then he owed his life. But there was not an instant of time to think of that now. Quick as lightning his arm flew up and his steel fell, crunching through the brain of the seaman, who dropped lifeless to the deck. Every act in this passage of arms passed with the rapidity of thought. There was not more than a minute occupied in the felling of Mulligan, the aiming of the pistol, the striking it up by Britomarte; and the braining of the assassin by Justin.

Now heedless of the battle storm that raged around them, Justin dropped upon one knee, as a knight before his queen, and, seizing the hand of his beloved, he exclaimed with deep emotion:

'I owe my life to you!'

'I have owed mine many times to you. Thank Heaven that you are saved!'

After the fall of their captain was known to them, the pirate crew submitted, crying for quarter.

The Sea Scourge was now the prize of the Xyphias.

And down came the Stars and Bars, and up ran the glorious old flag!

CHAPTER XVLII.

VICTORY.

Thus far our fortunes keep an onward course,
And we are graced with wreaths of victory.
—*Shakspeare.*

Plumed victory
Is truly painted with a cheerful look
Equally distant from ground insolence
And false humility.
—*Massinger.*

As soon as the crew of the Sea Scourge had surrendered, Captain Yetsom ordered them below and closed the hatches.

Then he detailed a small party of his own men and placed them under the command of Midshipman Hector, to take charge of the prize, and ordered the others to their own ship.

As soon as he regained the deck of the Xyphias he sent for Lieutenant Ethel, and passed down into his cabin.

A strange weakness, dimness and dimness of sight was creeping over him.

'Why, what is this?' he said to himself. 'It cannot be from that scratch! Bosh! I must get a glass of brandy.'

But in the act of crossing to his locker, he turned giddy, reeled, grasped at the nearest object for support, and then fell forward upon his face to the cabin floor in a deep swoon.

At that very moment Lieutenant Ethel was in the act of coming down the companion ladder.

He instantly ran to his assistance, exclaiming anxiously:

'Captain! what is the matter? Are you ill?—wounded?'

Receiving no answer he placed his hands under his captain's arms to lift him up, and in doing so perceived that his coat was saturated with some warm glutinous matter. Instantly withdrawing his hands for examination, he found them covered with thick blood. In serious alarm now, he turned the captain and drew him gently to a spot where the fresh air could blow upon him, and then he ran to the head of the companion ladder and calling to the sentinel stationed near, he said:

'Scribner, pass the word to the cockpit that the captain requires the presence of the surgeon immediately in his cabin.'

He refrained, from prudential motives, from saying that the captain was wounded, (and dying, as he supposed him to be,) for Captain Yetsom was so idolized by his crew, that any injury done to him would be likely at any time to be visited heavily upon the perpetrators. And Mr. Ethel felt that should the crew of the Xyphias, in their present state of excitement, hear of their captain's danger, no one could be answerable for the lives of the prisoners on the Sea Scourge. So he gave the order in the ambiguous words quoted. And that order was passed precisely as it was given.

Ethel, for his part, rushed back to the side of the captain and began rapidly to unbutton his coat and vest. When he came to his under-clothing he found it crimson with blood, that had flowed so freely as even partially to fill the space between his top-boots and the limbs they covered.

The young lieutenant groaned in anguish of spirit, for he loved his captain as man seldom loves man.

The surgeon now came down the companion ladder. Seeing Ethel bending over the prostrate form of the captain and tearing away the blood-stained clothing, he rushed forward, exclaiming:

'What's all this? What's the matter? The captain wounded? Good Lord! he is one clot of blood! In Heaven's name, sir, why was I not told before?'

'I came in here but a moment ago and found him lying flat on his face,' replied the young man, in a heart-broken voice. 'Oh, doctor, is he dying?'

'I hope and trust not. He has fainted from loss of blood.'

'I loved him as a father! he was so good, so kind! Oh, doctor, is he wounded mortally?'

'How can I tell until I examine the wound. Here, take hold of this sleeve of his undershirt while I take the other. Now draw gently. There's the wound. And what a wound. I fear it is all over with our poor captain. Come Ethel. Stop that, this is no time for blubbering like a woman, my boy. A minute, as we use or waste it, may save or lose our captain's life. Here, take the water in this basin and gently swab the blood away from that wound, which I perceive has nearly stopped bleeding, while I run for my instruments,' said the doctor, rushing out of the cabin as fast as his fat legs could carry him.

No braver man than young Ethel had boarded the fire scourge that day; yet as soon as the doctor was gone he burst into sobs that shook his whole frame, and his fast falling tears mingled freely with the water with which he washed his captain's wound. He did his work as tenderly and as thoroughly as possible, and had perfectly cleansed the wound by the time the doctor returned. And even to the young man's unprofessional eye the wound looked less formidable than at first.

The doctor got down upon his knees and made a very careful examination, and then he lifted his head and exclaimed:

'Thank Heaven! it is not near so bad as I had expected to find it. It is an ugly flesh wound at worst, and he'll weather it. You see, a pistol ball had entered here on his right side and furrowed its way clear across the chest, and came out under the left arm. No wonder he bled so much. But he could bear it. He could bear it.'

While the doctor spoke he lost no time; he was busy cutting long, slim strips of sticking-plaster, with which he gradually brought the ragged edges of the wound together, securing them by laying the strips at right angles with the length of the wound, and then carefully bandaging.

When this was done, with young Ethel's assistance he washed his patient thoroughly put fresh clothes on him and laid him on the bed.

Lastly, the doctor administered restoratives, that soon brought the captain to himself.

On recovering his consciousness, Captain Yetsom looked languidly around, and finding himself upon his bed, and seeing Doctor Brown and Lieutenant Ethel bending anxiously over him, he feebly inquired:

'Why am I here? What has happened?'

'You have been wounded, but no, seriously. You fainted from loss of blood and fell upon your cabin floor. Lieutenant Ethel found you and called me. And we have dressed your wound, and undressed you and put you to bed, where you are to remain for the present.'

The captain reflected a moment and then said:

'I thought I was scratched—somewhere under my coat; but I had no idea that I was wounded and bleeding to the point of faintness.'

'No, perhaps not; for no one else had, till we picked you up. The thickness of your clothing prevented the blood coming through, except in a very small quantity, which could not be perceived on account of the colour of your coat. But your underclothing was crimsoned down to your boots. So there is nothing left for you to do now but to lie quietly here until you recover,' said the doctor, speaking thus frankly because he saw plainly symptoms of rebellion on the part of his patient. The symptoms broke out.

'Bosh! No here indeed, and the fight just over, and a thousand things to see to, and I the commander of the ship,' exclaimed Captain Yetsom, throwing one leg out of the bed and rising off his elbow. But he immediately fell back from faintness.

'Ah, ha!' said the doctor. 'Try that again, my lad, will you? Now see here, captain, you are the commander of the ship; but I am the commander of you just at present, and I command you to keep still. And it depends upon your obedience to my commands whether you continue to command your ship, or whether you go on a visit to Davy Jones, with a pair of thirty-two pounders to your head and your heels.'

While the doctor spoke the captain had been contemplating his own hands, so rough and ruddy a few hours ago, so white and warm now.

'Jehoshaphat, King of the Jews!' he faintly exclaimed; 'can these be my hands?'

'Yes! and you've got a face to match 'em! Do they look like wielding a cutlass, or cooking a revolver? Or even like holding a spouting trumpet to your lips, supposing those white lips of yours strong enough to speak through it? Come, captain, be a good child for once, and keep quiet since you can do no otherwise.'

The captain writhed and fretted. Of all things he abhorred to lie inactive in bed at this crisis. But he recognised the truth of doctor's words, and he submitted to necessity, the more readily because he felt that

the few words he had spoken had already tormented him. He rested to recover a little strength, and then he beckoned young Ethel to stoop close to his lips.

'Mr. Ethel,' he whispered, 'you will take command of both ships. See the prisoners secured according to your best judgment. Make all necessary repairs. Then—shape for Cape Town.'

Having with difficulty given these orders Captain Yetmen turned his face to the wall, and from sheer exhaustion fell asleep.

Doctor Brown and Lieutenant Ethel left the cabin. The doctor went to attend to his other cases. The lieutenant hastened to attend to the important duties that now devolved upon him.

Meantime, where were our two young friends, and what were they about? Justin and Britomarte had returned to the Xyphias with the officers and crew. As soon as the general congratulations upon the victory were over, Justin walked apart with Britomarte, and taking her unresisting hand in his, looked upon it with intense affection for a while, and then, in a low and earnest voice, he said—

'You have gloriously redeemed your word, my sister. You have borne a heroic part in this engagement. You have passed where the commanding fire has been heaviest, and you have risked your life in the thickest of the fight. But thank God!—oh, forever and forever thank God that this white hand has been raised only to save and to heal, and not to slay!'

His voice, his whole frame so shook with emotion as he uttered these last words, that she caught the contagion and dropped her head upon his shoulder and burst into tears. He drew her closer to his heart and leaned over her.

The rough sailors passing near saw all this, but they had long ago set this pair down as betrothed lovers, and their only feeling was one of sympathy with them.

'By mammy!' said one grey old sea-dog as he passed, 'if I could find a gal as spunky as that one, I'd spark her myself, old as I am!'

Justin knelt over Britomarte, delicately soothing her, more by looks and touch than by words. At last he said—

'Do you know—can you imagine, dearest, how deeply, doubly grateful I am to Divine Providence that it is to you I owe my life? A good gift is always precious, but more precious from those we love, and most precious from the one we love most!'

'Brother Justin,' she said, raising her head and smiling through her tears, 'do not make more of this matter than it really is. I, too, am deeply grateful that I was enabled to save one who first saved me, and who for two long years acted hard to keep me from starvation on that desert island. Say no more about that, brother; but oh! devoutly thank God with me that He has protected you through all the dangers of this dreadful day!'

'I do—I do, Britomarte! that He has protected, not me alone, but us, for you have been throughout as as great danger as any here. Oh, heaven! when I think of that I—'

'Brother Justin,' interrupted Britomarte, recovering her old tone, 'whatever we do, don't let us grow sentimental.'

'We will not. But this I will say, and you must hear: By one of the most humble acts that man or woman ever dared, at the most imminent risk of your own life, you have saved mine. But I tell you now, Britomarte Conyers, that the life you have saved is worthless, and worse than worthless to me, unless you will allow me to devote it henceforth and forever to you!'

Again his voice and his whole frame shook with the intensity of his emotions. She, too, was deeply agitated; but with a queenly effort she regained the sovereignty over herself, and answered gravely—

'I am ashamed of you, brother Justin. That sentiment was quite unworthy of the mighty champion of the Xyphias, who carried terror into the hearts of the Sea Scourgers. Devote your life to God and to His suffering humanity, and leave me to do the same.'

And she was about to leave him to return to her wounded in the cockpit, when something in his aspect, that was not sentiment, or passion, or anything like either, alarmed her.

'Justin—brother! how ill you look! What is the matter? Is it possible that you are wounded?' she breathlessly demanded.

'I am fatigued, dear sister; do not disturb yourself. But where is Judith? I have not seen that warlike heroine for some time, though she was a brave volunteer for any emergency. Is she killed, wounded, or taken prisoner?' laughingly inquired Justin.

Britomarte also laughed as she replied:

'Poor Judith! If her nerves had been as firm as her will was good, no doubt she would have kept her promise. But at the sound of the first gun her wits left her; at the second, she buried herself, head and ears, in the blankets of her berth; and—the last I saw of her, she was flying down, making for some unknown depths of the

ship's hull. I must really go and inquire for her.'

'Ay, sister, go,' said Justin, in a faint voice.

'Justin, you are ill!' exclaimed Britomarte, looking at him with renewed alarm.

'Fatigued, dear sister, fatigued.'

'But you are so pale!'

'Have you not seen me as pale as this after a day's work on the island?'

'Yes, sometimes, when the weather was very warm.'

'Well, the work has been very warm to-day. Never heed me, sister. A little rest will set me all right, and then I shall be able to give some assistance to the officers, until they reduce this chaos to order again.'

Very slowly and reluctantly Britomarte left him, and went down into the cockpit to send a messenger to look for Judith, while she herself gave her services to the wounded.

As soon as Britomarte was out of sight, Justin tottered to the nearest gun carriage, and sat down upon it, utterly unable to move a step farther.

In the hand to hand fight on board the Sea Scourge, he had been half conscious of receiving a wound, though in the excitement of battle he had paid no attention to it; but when the fight was over and the excitement subsided, he was made fully aware, by a sharp pain under his right arm, and a trickling sensation, that he was wounded and bleeding. Even then, not wishing to part with Britomarte, he had retained her at his side until an approaching faintness warned him that to save her from the knowledge of his condition, he must let her go. Therefore he spoke of Judith, that Britomarte might go in search of her, and give him the opportunity to look to his wound. His life-blood was flowing fast away, his strength was failing him, yet he gave no utterance to suffering, lest he should distress her whom he loved more than life.

Now that she had left him, it was with a sigh of intense relief he sank down upon his rude seat. He felt that he had not power to reach his cabin, and that he must look to his wound at the act.

He called to a seaman passing near, and desired his assistance. He also sent word to the steward at the cabin door not to let the women out until he should give the word.

Then, with the help of the seaman, he took off his clothes and came to the wound.

It was not a severe one, though it had bled so freely. He had been struck from behind with some long, sharp weapon that had entered near the armpit, passed through the flesh of the right side, and come out through the skin near the breast bone.

The other sailors, seeing Justin stripped to the waist and covered with blood, came running to him with expressions of alarm and sympathy, for by his bravery and kindness he had become a general favourite.

They were all vociferous in their demands for the surgeon. But Justin checked them with a word.

'My good friends,' he said, 'there are many poor fellows who need the surgeon much more than I do; let him attend to them first.'

And then he sent a cabin boy for some water, towels, and clean clothes from his state-room.

At this moment Lieutenant Ethel came out of the cabin. Seeing the men grouped idly around the gun carriage, he came up to order them to their duties, when perceiving the state of Justin, he exclaimed:

'Good Heaven, Mr. Rosenthal! You wounded, too.'

'Yes, but very slightly. Give yourself no uneasiness, Lieutenant.'

'Has the surgeon been sent for?'

'No, and pray do not send for him. Leave him to attend to the poor fellows who need him more than I do.'

'I insist upon sending for him. All our badly injured men have been looked to. And now that I see your hurt is not the trifle you would make it out to be. Here, Jones, go down to the cockpit and desire the surgeon to come up at once. Men, to your duties.'

The messenger went on his errand. The seamen dispersed at the order. And soon the good doctor came.

'Ah! Mr. Rosenthal wounded? I thought it hardly possible for you to have escaped, if all were true that I had heard of you. Not badly hurt, I hope? Let me see.—This fellow has struck at you from behind, and with a dagger, too. May Satan fly away with the cowardly assassin. If he can be identified, he ought to be hanged.'

'Never mind him now. I don't care to have him identified. And I don't think the wound severe.'

'No, it is not severe. A few day's rest and regimen will set you all right.'

The doctor soon closed the wound, and then told Justin to lean on his arm while he led him to his state-room.

But Justin asked the doctor first to send down to the cabin, and get the women out upon some pretence, as he did not wish to distress Miss Conyers with needless fears.

'Miss Conyers. Why bless you, my dear fellow, I left Miss Conyers in the cockpit, hovering like an angel of mercy over the poor wounded sailors there, ministering to their wants, alleviating their sufferings and bringing smiles to faces that before her coming had been wrung with anguish. She is a lovely woman,' said the doctor.

'Heaven knows she is,' responded Justin.

The doctor now supported his patient to the state-room, laid him in the berth, and after a few moments left him in a refreshing sleep.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

EXPIATION.

Nothing in his life
Became him like his leaving it. He died
As one that had been studied in his death
To throw away the dearest thing he owned
As 'twere a careless trifle.—*Shakespeare.*

Among the killed on board the Xyphias was Captain Spear.

Whether it had been owing to his long enforced abstinence from his bane, strong drink, or to the long hours of solitude giving him ample time for reflection on the Desert Island, or to earlier and holier associations revived, or to all these influences combined, I do not know, but it is certain that a gradual change for the better had been stealing over this man for some time before the sea-fight.

Up to the day of the engagement he had had the freedom of the ship. On that day, however, in the beginning of the action, Captain Yetsom, meeting him on deck, had said:

'I know how hard it is for a brave man to be cooped up in his quarters while a battle is going on; but prudential considerations oblige me to send you to yours. Were you at large here, unforeseen accidents might place it in your power to do us much injury.'

'Captain Yetsom,' said Spear, speaking earnestly and seeking to meet the eye of the commander of the Xyphias, 'if you will give me the freedom of your deck during this engagement, I promise you upon my sacred honour that I will take no part in it against you, or for your enemy. I owe the dogs who deserted me no love or service, Heaven knows. And even should circumstances place it in my power to harm you, or aid them, I will do neither. I swear it in the hearing of high Heaven.'

Captain Yetsom looked into the eyes that had been seeking his so earnestly, and saw in them such good faith as won his confidence.

'Well—I will trust you,' he said, and hurried off to his duties.

Spear had promised no more that this.

All through the exciting chase he had remained a silent inactive spectator, brooding mournfully over—what?

Officers and men passing rapidly on their hurried errands, sometimes glanced at this sombre figure standing like a statue there, and wondered carelessly what his thoughts and feelings might be.

And what were they in truth? Who could tell? Was his love for the old flag stealing over him? Did he remember how his father, now in his grave, had sailed and served under it for more than forty well-spent years? how that brave and patriotic father had taught him to love and honour it as the emblem of his nation, the safeguard of liberty, the ægis under which the oppressed of all the earth found or hoped to find protection? Or did he remember his own stainless and promising youth when he had been the pride of his father, the joy of his mother, the idol of his brothers and sisters, and the very life's life of her, the fair one, dearer than all the rest, who was to have been his wife, but from whom the sins of his manhood had utterly divided him.

Did he recall the sorrowful but exultant day when he first left home to enter the naval academy at Annapolis, and [illegible] his mother's tearful eyes looking [illegible] with unutterable love, and pride, [illegible] and hear again her voice, saying:

'Remember, boy, it is your mother's wish and prayer that you should add new lustre to the name that has been associated with your country's navy since its infancy. You cannot serve your country well without serving your God better. Live and labour for God and your country.' Did he hear again his own youthful lips replying:

'For God, my country and my mother!' Did he feel again the sudden clasp with which she strained him to her heart in that last embrace?

Who can tell? No one read his heart, but many saw the tears that coursed down his sun-burnt cheek as he dropped his face upon his hands.

Did he remember how, for four happy years, he had studied under that cherished flag? how he had graduated first in his class, and been honoured with the congratulations and encomiums of veteran officers, who had grown gray in the service? how he was blessed by his parents, praised by his sisters and brothers and almost worshipped by his sweet young love? and how—oh, Heaven!

—it was in the midst of the merry-makings and wine-drinkings incident upon this occasion that the first seeds of a fatal vice—the vice of inebriation—had been sown in his system, and how for years it had been cherished and indulged in secret, unknown to his nearest friend?

Did he recall the proud and jubilant day on which he received his first commission, when a temperate dinner party was given at his home in his honour, when his family and his betrothed had been present, and when as night he had stolen off to his bedroom, and finished the celebration of the day by getting drunk in solitude? Did he remember how he worked for—and won the confidence and respect of his superior officers, notwithstanding the growing of that fatal vice, which he took care to conceal so well?

Was he thinking how, when the clouds preceding the storm of civil war began to gather, his venerable father was stricken with death? how, when all the family, with heavy hearts and streaming eyes, were gathered around his death-bed the veteran had turned his dying eyes upon his sailor son, and said:

'My boy, civil war is upon us. Unprincipled men on both sides, from selfish ambition, that would ruin themselves upon their country's ruin, or, from pure malignity, more devilish still, have stirred up animosities, both North and South, but most especially in the South, so that the Southerners are resolved upon separation from the Union at all hazards—if possible, a peaceful separation; if not, a violent one. Now a peaceful separation can never be effected, as it is against the spirit of our constitution and the principles of our government, for which our forefathers' blood was so freely poured forth. Nor can a violent one be accomplished; for both North and South the loyal people outnumber the traitors by hundreds to units! But there will be a long and sanguinary war! In the coming fiery trial, my son, remember your dying father urges you—be true to the flag he has upheld, by land and sea, for more than forty years!'

'I will, my father—I will!' the son had answered, no doubt meaning all he said.

'And may Heaven deal with you in your utmost need as you deal with your country in hers! And so may God bless you, my first-born,' were the last words of the veteran.

How had he kept that promise.

Ah! seduced by evil counsellors, misled by specious arguments, tempted by ambition, and weakened by that growing vice, he had suffered himself to be drawn in and hurried down into that maelstrom, in which so many brave, misguided spirits perished!—he had deserted the old flag!—he had raised his hand against it!

I cannot speak here with assurance, for I gathered these antecedents of this man from another source than his lips; but I think it must have been memories like these that caused the sobs and tears that shook his broad chest and flowed down his bronzed cheeks as he stood again under the old flag, among the men who were fighting for it. I say that no one could read his heart or tell his thoughts and feelings; but many saw his actions and heard the few words he utter d.

'God have mercy on me, what have I been doing! God forgive me, for I have been mad I think!'

While he had been standing thus absorbed, entranced, by the memories of the past and the pains of the present, the storm of battle had been gathering all around him.

The ships had been manœuvring and were now abreast of each other, pouring in their broadsides.

The tremendous crash of the reports aroused him. He started up, his eyes kindled with a new resolution, and he watched his opportunity to put it in practice.

It came. He saw a brave gunner fall. He sprang to fill his place, and served the gun until he was relieved. After that he threw himself into the action with all his soul, now serving a gun that was short-handed, now cap in hand cheering on the men. He drew attention from all. Many a brave old sailor in the midst of the battle found time to grasp his hand, saying:

'You are one of us still, God bless you!' or words to that effect. One earnest old gunner of the order of men who prayed and fought, gave him a grip, exclaiming, with more cordiality than coherence:

'"There is more joy in Heaven over one," et cetera, and "go thou and do likewise."'

On seeing his zeal and devotion, Justin found time once to dart to his side and say:

'Heaven bless you for your noble example! I had done you injustice in the past. Forgive me now!'

'You did me no injustice, Mr. Rosenthal. I had given you too much reason by word and deed to think the worst of me. I was never so evil as I made myself out to be, however; though evil of late have been my days. Enough! that is past! And I am offering up my life in expiation now.'

He was indeed. He never shrunk from

duty or from danger. And not ten minutes after these words had left his lips a cannon ball from the enemy struck and cut him in two. And thus at last was his promise to his dying father grandly redeemed.

To return from this episode.

Lieutenant Ethel, on leaving Justin, ordered the forehold of the Xyphias to be prepared to receive the prisoners. Then he mustered his men under arms, passed over to the Sea Scourge, ordered the hatches to be taken off and the prisoners to come up on deck.

One hundred and nineteen men responded to the call, and were all marched to their place of confinement, with the exception of the officers, who were furnished quarters with the officers of the Xyphias.

As soon as the prisoners were secured, a portion of the ship's company were set to putting the Xyphias in order. The decks were swabbed, the rigging righted, and all traces of the late conflict so effectually removed, that she began again to look like one of our tidy men-of-war, and not like a cross between a shipwreck and a butcher's shambles.

Lieutenant Ethel, with the surgeon and another portion of the crew, went over to the Sea Scourge, to attend to her remaining wounded and to put her to rights.

The injured men on the upper deck having been already removed and relieved, the lieutenant and the surgeon passed at once to the lower deck, where a sight of horror met their eyes.

The wounded, dying and dead, lay scattered thickly around. The groans of the living were more appalling than the ghastliness of the dying or the dead.

All that were still breathing were at once tenderly removed to the cockpit, where the surgeon of the Xyphias, assisted by the surgeon of the Sea Scourge, dressed their wounds, administered opiates, or in other ways sought to alleviate their sufferings.

Body after body of the dead was brought up, sewed in a sail-cloth winding-sheet, with a weight at head and foot, and solemnly consigned to the deep to remain until that dread day when 'the sea shall give up its dead.'

This sacred duty having been performed, the deck was swabbed and put in as good order as circumstances would admit.

The carpenter now reported that he had plugged all the shot holes of both ships under or near the water line, and sounded their pumps, and that neither of them now gained any more water.

Lieutenant Ethel then ordered that the further repairs needed by both vessels should be continued by watches both day and night, so that the benefit of the present calm might not be lost.

And then he went below and turned in to take the rest he so much needed.

Britomarte, on leaving Justin had gone, as I said, down into the cockpit to look after her own especial cases among the wounded, and also to despatch a messenger in search of Judith. An hour passed away, during which Britomarte had ministered to the wants of all her patients, and at the end of which her messenger returned without any news of Judith, who was nowhere to be found.

Miss Conyers now felt seriously alarmed lest some fatal accident had happened to the girl, or lest she, in her delirium of terror, had cast herself into the sea. In the midst of his anxiety, however, it occurred to her that at the cessation of the cannonading Judith might have returned to the cabin. With this hope Britomarte returned thither.

She had scarcely reached the foot of the companion ladder, when she thought she heard a groan coming from the direction of the state-room occupied in common by herself and Judith.

She hurried thither and opened the door, and there lay the girl tossing and moaning in high fever, brought on by excitement.

'Lorrd bless you, ma'am, is it yerself sure! Troth I thought you had forgot me entirely, and left me here to perish alone. Faix I'm burning up, so I am. May the divil flay away wid all say-fights, for this has been the death iv me, so it has. Sure I'm murthered completely from head to fut. And you left me to me fate, so you did.'

'But, Judith, my girl, I didn't know that you were here. My time has been taken up with relieving the sufferings of the poor wounded sailors, who had much greater need of my care than you could have had. As soon as I had leisure to think of you I sent a messenger to look for you. And as soon as I could leave my patients I came in quest of you myself. Whatever made you rush from the cabin in that frantic manner?' soothingly inquired Miss Conyers.

'Whativer made me? Thim bastes iv guns, sure! Troth, when the first boomed out I thought me skull was cracked sure. And whin the second boomed out I thought me head was blown off me shoulders! And so to kape the life iv me bones togither I up and ran down to the lower deck. May I niver sin if it wasn't worse there nor in the cabin itself. So this

I dove down into the cock-pit. And may I niver see death if that wasn't the worst place iv all? For there lay the saymen, wounded and blading and groaning and dying. Some wid arms aff, and some wid legs aff, and some wid their heads broken, and some wid their breasts torn apart. Mushala, I niver could abide the sight iv blood, let alone the smell iv it; and sure I wint laping mad wid the horror, so I did. And the doctor, perceiving me jumping and bouncing about, like a chicken wid its head aff, towld me to stand still for a fool, and to take howld iv a man's fut and kaps it stiddy till he cut his leg off. Och! the murthering ould brute baste iv a butcher! he samed as if he'd cut me own legs off while his hand was in as soon as look at me. So wid the fear and the horror me limbs give way under me, and I drapped down.'

'And, says the doctor, "'whativer is the matther wid ye?"

'And, says I, "och, doctor, jewel (for I behooved to be polite to the ould haythen while I was in his clutches) "och doctor, jewel," says I, "I'm murthered complately wid the noise iv the guns, and the smell in the blood, and the sight iv the wounded."

'And says the doctor, says he; "Be aff wid ye to yer cabin. Sure this is no place for the sikes iv ye."

'Troth, ma'am, I didn't wait for him to bid me twice. I jumped up and took to my hales for the cabin, so I did. But just thin there came a thundering noise, as if all the guns had gone aff at once and thrown the ould ship into convulsions—for sure she shook as if she was in fits—and I thought she was blown up entirely; and faix meself lost me raison altogither, and troth whin I found it, I was lying here, wid me head aching and burning and throbbing like me brain was all one great boil ready to break.'

'But did you manage to reach this place alone, Judith, or did some one help you here?'

'Nivir a bi iv me knows! It was just what I'm afther telling ye. I lost my raison whin the divils let aff all the guns at once, and whin I found it again I was here. Och, murther! me poor head!' Bad cess to the day that iver I saw the salt say! Sure it got me poor ould dad! and it got me gay Tom! and now it's afther meself!'

'Hush, Judith! You must be quiet, or you will grow worse. Try to compose yourself now, while I go and get something that will do you good,' said Miss Conyers, laying a towel wet with cold water upon the girl's burning head.

Then she went in search of the surgeon and procured an opiate, which she administered to her patient. Then she renewed the wet towel, re-arranged the disordered bed, darkened the room and left Judith to repose. If any of my readers imagine this portrait to be overdrawn, I can assure them that it is not. I knew this girl for years. She was just the 'medley of contraries'—the mixture of wit and folly, good sense and absurdity, spirit and cowardice, selfishness and self-devotion, that I represent her to have been. I lost her, and 'could have better spared a better.'

From the cabin Miss Conyers returned to the cockpit, to her wounded, bringing smiles to the faces of the poor sufferers, as she tenderly eased their positions, turned their pillows, bathed their faces and hands, or held cooling drinks to their feverish lips.

It was while Britomarte was engaged in this humane work, that the surgeon was summoned on the upper deck. But little did she imagine that he was called to attend Justin, or that Justin had the slightest need of his care.

Britomarte did not confine her attentions to the wounded on the Xyphias. But when she had done all she could for them she visited the Sea Scourge and ministered to the sufferers there.

The next morning the repairs upon the Xyphias were completed, so that she was once more in good fighting order.

The men were then transferred to the Sea Scourge to expedite the work there. Lieutenant Ethel found the decks of the prize clean and sweet, the wounded men in their hammocks, and the work progressing so rapidly that the privateer would be fit for sailing in twenty-four hours.

Britomarte, worn out by her arduous labours of the day before, slept very late that morning; and upon entering the cabin she found that the breakfast had been long set. She was very hungry, but not knowing the condition of her companions, she patiently waited for their appearance, only wondering at their prolonged absence.

At length the steward entered the cabin, and she inquired what detained the gentleman.

The man, forewarned not to alarm her, answered that neither Captain Yetsom nor Mr. Rosenthal had risen yet.

So Britomarte, amazed at their self-indulgence and unsuspicious of their true state, breakfasted alone, and then took in a cup of tea and a round of toast

to Judith, whose fever was now gone, but who still kept her bed from the weakness of re-action.

Finding still that her companions did not appear, she became uneasy and went to seek the surgeon and inquire of him the true reason of their absence.

Doctor Brown informed her that they were both wounded though not dangerously; and that he had ordered them to keep quiet for a day or two.

'My brother Justin wounded! And I not know it until now! Oh, Doctor Brown, I must go to him at once!' she exclaimed, in excessive agitation.

'No, Miss Conyers, you must not—you of all persons.'

'But I will go! Who shall hinder me? And why should I not? Why shouldn't I, who have attended so many wounded seamen who had no claims upon me but those of common humanity, go and wait on my own——' her voice broke down in tears.

—'Sweetheart!' said the doctor, archly, finishing her sentence in his own way.

'No, sir! my own soul's brother!' flashed Britomarte.

The doctor shrugged his shoulders.

'I ask you why I may not minister to my brother, as I have ministered to scores of strangers?'

'Because your presence would agitate him as it could not possibly agitate strangers. He must be kept quiet to-day. His wound is not a dangerous one as it is now; but there are incident upon even slight wounds such things as irritative fevers, which are bad, and erysipelas, which is worse.'

Britomarte sank down upon a coil of rope and covered her face with her hands.

'Now don't do that! You, the "Battle Queen" of yesterday, to give way to-day because your—them! well! brother, since you will have it, brother—is wounded! I tell you his wound is not dangerous, scarcely serious. The worst of it is he concealed it too long. He concealed it until every other case was attended to—noble fellow! Now see here! I told you of what might possibly happen in case he should be excited, only to prove to you how necessary it is that he should be quiet. Now I will tell you what I will do with you. I will promise that if he is kept still to-day, he shall see you for a few minutes to-morrow or next day.'

But Britomarte was too much agitated to trust herself to speak. She started up, hurried to her state-room, flung herself upon her berth and burst into tears.

'Justin wounded,' she sobbed, 'and concealing his wound from all others [illegible] the humblest sufferer was served! And concealing it even from me, to save me pain! How patient, how noble, how self-sacrificing he always is! Justin wounded! and so much more seriously than the doctor will admit. And if he should die! disappear from this earth forever. I could not live on! I could not. Heavenly Father, spare him and save me this dread trial that I could not bear!'

Yes truly, the 'Battle Queen' of yesterday was a weeping woman to-day.

The next morning, on waking, both Captain Yetsom and Mr. Rosenthal found themselves much better, though still so heavily oppressed with languor and weariness that they dozed away the whole day, indifferent to all that was going on around them and unconscious almost even of their own existence.

Britomarte again breakfasted alone, feeling very miserable. She had never realized so keenly how virtually necessary to her happiness Justin's presence was. And she was not permitted to see him that day.

In the course of the forenoon Judith came out of her state-room, cross and sulky, and muttering maledictions upon the sea, the ships, the guns, and most things in general.

Meanwhile the calm still continued and the works on the prize were all but finished.

On the third morning our two wounded friends were much better.

Justin especially, whose hurt was the least severe, felt his strength so much revived, and his wish to see Britomarte so urgent, that in the afternoon he arose and dressed himself and crept out into the cabin.

Britomarte was seated with her elbow resting upon the centre table, and her forehead bowed upon her hands in deep thought.

Justin came quietly to her side, and resting his hand upon the table, whispered softly:

'Britomarte!'

Like a deer she sprang up, her hands extended, her whole face beaming with joy, as she exclaimed:

'Oh, Justin! I am so glad to see you! I have missed you so much! I wished to go and nurse you, but the doctor would not allow it. How is your wound? And oh, why did you conceal it from me?'

'Dear Britomarte, I did not wish to distress you with groundless anxieties. My injury was slight. I am nearly well now, and I am more than repaid for my sho[illegible]

confinement by the welcome you give me. But yourself! I hear that you have been a sister of mercy among the wounded. How have you borne the trial?' he inquired, looking down upon her with infinite tenderness and solicitude.

'I have borne everything well, except your wound and your concealment of it from me. Oh, Justin.'

'Well, well, dear sister, I am all right now—quite right,' he answered, smiling.

But even as he spoke she saw his lips grow white, and a film pass over his eyes, but she governed her alarm, and said gently:

'Justin, you must lie down—there on the sofa; hush! you must not speak. I will help you there, and I will get a book and sit down by you and read to you, but if you attempt to talk I will leave you.'

'Well, I submit myself to you, my gentle nurse,' said Justin, willingly enough obeying her mandate, for he felt that he was not strong enough to sit up, or self-denying enough to leave Britomarte's company.

So she led him to the sofa and eased him gently down upon it, and arranged the cushions under his head and chest.

Then she drew a chair to his side, and sat down to read to him. Her right hand held the book open on her lap, her left hand lay softly on his forehead. She read purposely in a low, monotonous tone.

Presently, as if her touch and tone were mesmeric, his eyes grew heavy, then closed. She shut her book, and continued to watch him until gradually her head drooped lower and lower, until her forehead rested on the arm of the sofa, and her beautiful, heavy, dark hair, slipping from its fastings, fell down and mingled with the auburn curls that shaded his pale forehead.

Both were asleep.

Judith came in and found them so. She stood contemplating them a few minutes, and then her Irish enthusiasm burst forth.

'Oh, sure, what a beautiful pictor entirely. It's like the babes in the woods, so it is, or Adam and Ave in the garden iv Aden, before the sarpint entered it. Sure it's made for aich other they are, the darlints. Troth meself wonders the chaplain did not marry them out iv hand, the jewels. Faix it's a pair iv slaping beauties they are, the angels. And meself will sit down and guard them.'

And Judith drew a chair up to the sofa, and sat herself squarely before them, losing all consciousness of her own pains, injuries and misadventures, in the satisfaction with which she contemplated this picture of [illegible].

CHAPTER XLIX.

A GHOST APPEARS TO JUDITH.

A horrid spectre rises on my sight,
Before my eyes all plain and palpable.
—*Joanna Baillie.*

Blood has been shed ere now... The time have been,
That when the brains were out the man would die,
And there an end; but now they rise again,
With twenty mortal murders on their crowns.
—*Shakespeare.*

The ships were now both repaired as well as they could be at sea. Passed Midshipman Bestor was placed upon the Sea Scourge with a prize crew, and ordered to sail when the Xyphias should, and if possible, to keep her always in view, or if he should lose sight of her, to shape for Cape Town and meet here there. The prisoners were then divided, half of them being sent back to the Sea Scourge.

By eight bells every preparation was completed for sailing. But there was no wind. A dead calm still prevailed. All that night and the next day it continued. But on the ensuing morning, just before dawn, Lieut. Ethel was awakened, and notified that the wind was rising.

He sprang up and hurried on deck, where he found the men all alert, and in the highest spirits. And soon both ships were bounding on their course.

From this day everything went on smoothly; wind and weather favoured them, the ship's kept in consort, and no unpleasant event occurred to mar the prosperity of the voyage.

Justin, under Britomarte's fostering care, rapidly improved. It was strange to see with what a motherly tenderness and solicitude this young girl guarded and guided the sick man who was at least ten or twelve years her elder. She would no permit him to over-exert himself in any way; she forestalled all his needs; she walked with him, sang to him, and amused his waking hours or soothed him to repose.

Poor Justin! this was a great joy and a great trial to him. He idolized her, but he was forbidden to tell her so. He was in raptures and he was in despair. He considered himself the happiest man alive, and he wished himself at the bottom of the sea.

Take it home to yourself my manly reader, if I have the honour of possessing one. Imagine yourself loving a young

woman beautiful as Venus, lovely as Psyche fascinating as a houri and good as an angel! Fancy yourself an interesting invalid, scooped up with her on board a man-of-war in mid-ocean. Picture her lavishing upon you every sort of gentle and tender care and service, at the same time that she forbids you, on pain of losing her entirely, ever to speak of love.

If you imagine all this, and you will be able to estimate the position of Justin with his beloved and loving enemy ever at his side.

Notwithstanding which he got well as fast under her fostering care, that on the seventh day from his sailing his name was stricken from the sick list.

Captain Yetsom also improved very rapidly under the skillful treatment of the surgeon.

On the tenth day, at night, every one was awakened by the lusty cry:

'Land ho!'

And on the morning of the eleventh, coming on deck, they found themselves anchored in Table Bay.

Here the captain announced that they should remain for twenty-four hours, as he had to see the American consul, and parole a portion of his prisoners.

Under these circumstances, Justin and Britomarte, taking Judith with them went into Cape Town, and spent the day with their hospital friends, the Barneys, at Silver Tree Villa.

In the meantime Captain Yetsom, who had now reached the command of his ship, went on shore, and made arrangements with the American consul there concerning the prisoners of the Sea Scourge, who he proposed should be paroled and put ashore at Cape Town. This measure, when made known to the prisoners, was met by different individuals in different ways. Some among them who were vagrants belonging to no particular country, such as might be picked up at any seaport to serve under any flag, were willing enough to be turned loose at Cape Town where they would be sure to find employment.

Others, chiefly Americans and Irish, rather than be left in a foreign port, were willing to take the oath of allegiance to their own or their adopted government, and to ship as seamen on board the Xyphias, which by reason of the large number killed and wounded, was now short handed.

Others again were neither willing to remain at Cape Town nor to take service on the Xyphias, and they earnestly exclaimed against the enormity of Captain Yetsom's cruelty in turning them loose upon a foreign shore.

Captain Yetsom, when he good-naturedly condescended to notice these grumbling remonstrances, answered them in a few words:

'Military, or rather naval necessity!' The Xyphias, going on her cruise after more privateers, could not be encumbered with prisoners—could not be converted into a floating gaol, and the prisoners could not be trusted on the Sea Scourge, which was to be sent home.

So these malcontents were left with the others.

The prisoners thus disposed of, Captain Yetsom turned his attention to other and equally important matters.

He relieved passed Midshipman Baxter of his charge, and ordered Lieutenant Ethel to take command of the prize to take her home to New York. He reinforced the crew of the prize with some of the best seamen from the Xyphias, and he wrote his dispatches to the Secretary of the Navy, describing the capture of the privateer, praising the conduct of his officers and crew, and especially recommending Lieutenant Ethel for promotion.

Britomarte, Justin and Judith were to go home on the prize. So on the afternoon of that day all their luggage was transferred from the cabin of the Xyphias to the quarters prepared for them on the Sea Scourge. But they themselves, yielding no less to their own inclinations than to the solicitations of the captain, determined to remain with their friends on the man-of-war all that night, and up to the hour of sailing the next morning.

'And we will have you read us a last poem, Miss Conyers,' said the chaplain.

'And sing us a last song,' said the doctor.

'And play with us a last rubber of whist. We haven't had one since the fight,' added the captain.

'I will do all these, dear friends,' answered the man-hater, who, while hating men in theory and in gross, was unconsciously beginning to tolerate them in practice and detail.

'Ah! Miss Conyers, my dear, be candid. Did you not think me a foolish, stupid, contemptible old brute that night when we were playing whist, and when the privateer was reported in sight, and I would finish the rubber before I arose from the table? Didn't you think me quite unworthy to be the captain of a man-of-war?'

'Yes, I did,' said Britomarte, frankly.

'But oh! Captain Yetsom, I have had good cause to change my opinion before these

And now I know that your calmness was just the self-possession of a brave man and skilful officer, who knew exactly what he was about.'

'Thank you, my dear,' said the captain of the Sea Scourge.

Britomarte visited and took leave of all her patients, who were now doing very well.

Then she joined her friends in the cabin, and did all they wished her to do.] She sang them a heroic song, 'Rally round the Flag, Boys,' which she had picked up at a music shop in Cape Town, where it had just been received. She told them that she would not read or sing any soft, sentimental stuff about parting and absence, because in these times they did not need melting but hardening. Lastly, she played with them a rubber of whist, and she and the captain beat Justin and the chaplain most thoroughly.

After that the captain ordered up a light supper of pickled oysters, chicken salad, bread, cheese, cakes, fruits and champagne.

And Britomarte and Justin, though habitually abstinent, did not on that occasion refuse to pledge their friends in a parting bumper.

Very early the next morning all was cheerful bustle on both ships, making ready to sail.

Lieutenant Ethel came on board the Xyphias to receive his captain's last orders, and then immediately returned to the Sea Scourge.

But not until the last hour, when the sails were set and the anchor was weighed, did Britomarte and Justin take a last leave of Captain Yetsom and his officers, and amid many mutual good wishes leave the deck of the Xyphias for the yawl boat that was to take them to the Sea Scourge.

When all was ready for sailing, the two vessels fired their signal guns and stood out to sea, the Xyphias shaping her course to the north-east, and the Sea Scourge to the north-west.

Britomarte, Justin and Judith stood in the stern of the Sea Scourge, leaning over the taffrail, and watching the Xyphias as long as she continued in sight.

On board the Xyphias the doctor and the chaplain stood in a similar position watching them. At intervals Captain Yetsom appeared with the other two, and waved his hat to his friends on the Sea Scourge, and was answered by the waving handkerchiefs of our party.

And this was kept up long after they failed to distinguish each other's faces, and until the ships themselves were out of each other's sight.

Then Britomarte, followed by Judith, turned to leave the deck.

I have no idea where Lieutenant Ethel stowed himself o' nights; for the chief cabin that should have been his quarters, he placed entirely at the exclusive service of Miss Conyers and her maid.

When Britomarte reached the privacy of this cabin, she felt strongly inclined to sit down and cry; but she was forestalled in her purpose by the Irish girl, who was deliberately preparing to give the Xyphias and her officers their 'dues iv graiving.'

In the most business-like manner, Judith sat down flat in the middle of the floor, took the comb out of her hair and shook her long purplish-black tresses down over her shoulders, threw her apron over her head, and commenced rocking herself to and fro and howling—

'Oh, me gay ship! me gallant man-iv-war! me beautiful swan iv the say! Ow-oo!—Shall I nivir see your sails again? Your sails that were white as the snow-flakes before they touched the earth. Ow-oo!—And your great guns, that shined like the red goold in the sun, and sent back ray for ray. Your great guns, that whin they opened their mouths to the inemy spake like the thunder in the Highest. Ow-oo!—And oh, me swate captain! me gay captain! me lovely captain! shall I nivir see your blissid head again, and your face that was as good, so it was, as a warm apple-dumpling in the winther? Ow-oo!—And oh, me darlint doother! me fine jewel iv a doother! me good angel iv a doother! Sure I loved you as a brither, and honoured you as a daddy and riverinced you as a faythor confessor itself. Troth you was the pupil iv me eye, the pulse iv me heart, and the life of me sowl, so ye was. And me heart is broke intirely for the want iv you this minute. Ow-oo!'

'Why, Judith,' said Miss Conyers, 'one would think to hear you go on so, that you were in love with the old surgeon.'

'Och, sure, no! I can't abide him!' whispered Judith, in an aside voice, as she glanced out of the corner of her apron. 'But sure I must give the cold bhrute his dues iv graiving wid the ithers. It wouldn't be civil to lave him out.'

And having made this explanation, Judith resumed the services, and went conscientiously through them all, bemoaning each officer by name and title, and not forgetting to make lamentable mention of the crew, and even of the little powder-monkeys.

Miss Conyers understood the nature of

Judith's performance too well, by this time to give herself any uneasiness about them. So she did not attempt to interfere with Judith's ceremonies.

When the girl had scrupulously discharged these duties of 'graiving,' she deliberately arose, washed her face, put up her hair, straightened her dress, and made herself generally tidy, cheerful and sensible.

Certainly the young Lieutenant Ethel was the soul of chivalry. I said that he had given up the chief cabin exclusively to Miss Conyers and her maid. And he never suffered any intrusion to be made upon them. Their quarters were as sacred as the private apartments of a royal family. But Miss Conyers was not selfish. She knew how to return such courtesy. And besides perfect solitude, or solitude only enlivened by the presence of Judith, was too much of a good thing even for the man-hater's taste. She felt how great a privation the loss of this cabin must be to Lieutenant Ethel, and the other young officers who had been accustomed to have the freedom of it; and above all to Justin Rosenthal, who could not with propriety visit it unless the other gentlemen did.

And so Miss Conyers invited her friends to make the cabin their day-home as formerly, and urged her invitation with so much engressement, that they saw its sincerity and gladly accepted it.

And thus the cabin became the rendezvous of the little circle of friends. And they spent their evenings in reading, singing, conversing, or playing whist as the case might be.

And the mornings and evenings of that homeward voyage were delightful.

At length Judith Riordan had a great misadventure. She saw a ghost. It happened in this manner.

It was the girl's custom of an evening, while the circle in the cabin were amusing themselves with books, cards or conversation, to go to the top of the companion ladder, and sit there musing, doming or watching the stars.

Sometimes when there were no seamen very near, she would go to the side of the ship, and lean over the bulwarks, gazing upon the phosphoric sparks of the waves as they flamed past.

One evening, about the fifth day from that on which they left the Cape, Lieutenant Ethel, Justin, Britomarte, and a young midshipman, were seated around the cabin table engaged in a rubber of whist, when they were all startled by piercing shrieks, followed immediately by the form of the girl, who came pitching, tumbling and rolling down the companion ladder, and fell upon the cabin floor.

All the company around the table sprang up simultaneously. And Justin rushed to Judith and raised her up, while Britomarte eagerly inquired what the matter was.

'Oh, it's the ghost! the ghost!' gasped Judith, beside herself with terror.

'What ghost, girl? Are you mad?' said Justin.

'Oh, the ghost iv me swateheart, sure!' sobbed Judith, white and shaking in her panic.

'Nonsense,' laughed Justin; 'ghost, indeed! I'd like to see one, for once. What does a ghost look like, Judith?'

'Ooh, a raw head and bloody bones it was! Ow-oo! Ow-ootch!' she screamed, covering up her face and falling into spasms.

'Give her some brandy,' suggested the young midshipman.

And Lieutenant Ethel called the steward, and had a glass of brandy brought immediately and poured down her throat. 'It seemed to do her good. They set her back in an arm chair, and Britomarte said—

'Now, Judith, tell us what alarms you so.'

'Lord bless ye, sin't I aither telling yez? It was the ghost, sure—the ghost iv me gay Tom, as was dhrowned in the dape say more'n two years ago.'

'The ghost of Foretop Tom. Judith, you were dreaming.'

'Faix, I wish it was a dhrame itself. But I was wide awake, sure, sitting at the head iv the ladher there, and gazing at a great star, and wondhering how far it was off, and what it would be like if one could take howld iv it. And sure I got tired iv that, and I rix up,' so I did, and seeing there was none iv them bastes iv saymen about, I thought I'd take a turn on the deck. And sure I hadn't walked tin steps afore, happening to raise my head, there I saw the ghost iv me gay Tom standing right forninst me own two looking eyes. Ow-oo! Ow-ootch!'

'Hush, Judith; don't scream so. Tell me what he looked like,' said Miss Conyers, convinced in her own mind that the girl had been dreaming.

'Troth, sin't I aither telling yez before? Sure a raw head and bloody bones he was! Thin as a skilhippin! pale as a spioter! and tall as the mainmast, wid a white linen cloth bound round his head, and his right fut tied up in a rag! and his left arm in a sling! and he a-laning on a crutch!'

'Judith, it was one of the convalescent wounded men you saw.'

'Divil a bit! It was the ghost iv me own Foretop Tom. Sure wouldn't I know it when I saw it, it standing there forninst me own two looking eyes. And didn't I like to die wid the fright? And didn't I wish the ship would open and let me down into the say?'

'Did it speak to you, Judith?' laughed Justin.

'Spake to me? Lord help ye! do you think I was going to wait for it to spake to me? No, I ran down into the cabin here as fast as me sales would bring me!'

'What do you think the ghost wanted of you, Judith?' inquired Lieutenant Ethel.

This was an unlucky question for Judith's equanimity. It set her speculating in horrors.

'What it wanted iv me, is it? Ah, Lord keep us, who can tell! Maybe to warn me iv another shipwreck, whin we should all be drowned. Or another say fight, whin we should all be murthered. Or at the laste of me own death itself. Sure a ghost divil a pace for nothing.'

'Never,' said Lieutenant Ethel, mischievously.

'Ow-oo! Ow-ooh!' screamed Judith, falling into fresh spasms.

And it became necessary to give her more brandy. And then Miss Conyers coaxed her off into her state-room and made her go to bed; and sat with her until, under the influence of the brandy she had taken, Judith fell asleep.

'What could have frightened her so?' inquired Miss Conyers, as she came out into the cabin.

'It was as you suggested, either a dream or the figure of one of our convalescent wounded men I suppose,' said young Ethel.

And this explanation seemed so plausible that it was adopted by all.

'You have very little good of your attendant, I fear, Miss Conyers. Since I have known her she certainly has been more trouble than use,' said the lieutenant.

Britomarte laughed and answered:

'Just so because since you have known her she has been in circumstances to draw out all the faults of her character. No one is perfect. But Judith would be a treasure were it not for her absurd fears—fears of everything—beasts, men, ghosts—with us.'

Saying which Miss Conyers sat down to the table and they finished their rubber of whist.

Next morning, under the influence of the cheerful sunlight, Judith herself was half inclined to laugh at her own superstitious terrors of the preceding night, and to admit that she might have been dreaming or deceived by an accidental likeness. But when evening came again she kept closely in the cabin, and nothing would induce her to leave it.

On the next afternoon, being the third day from the first appearance of the mysterious visitor, Miss Conyers left Judith engaged in tidying the cabin, and went up on deck to sit and read. She had not been there more than ten minutes when, Judith came flying towards and dropped at her feet, and buried her face in her lap.

'In the name of Heaven, Judith, what is the matter now? Are you really going mad?' exclaimed Britomarte.

'It appeared to me again! It appeared to me again!' screamed the girl.

'What?'

'The ghost. It looked in at me through the cabin windys. It had its head tied up again! and its arm in a sling! I know it's come to warn me in me death! I know it has!'

'Judith, you will drive me out of my wits if you go on so. Be quiet,' said Miss Conyers, sternly.

'Ow-oo! Ow-ooh!' screamed Judith, clasping Britomarte firmly, and burying her head in her lap.

Miss Conyers beckoned a cabin boy who was passing by, and sent him to ask Mr. Lieutenant to come to her.

And when Justin obeyed the summons, Britomarte pointed to Judith and said laughing:

'She has seen the ghost again, and is senseless and helpless with terror. Assist me to take her down into the cabin.'

With an impatient shrug of his shoulders, Justin complied with the request. And they took Judith down, and laid her on the berth of her state-room.

'It is quite useless to be doing this girl any kindness. We shall have her to drink. Go and bring me a glass of cold water,' said Miss Conyers.

And when Justin brought it she made Judith swallow it.

'What can ail the girl, Justin? Is she losing her senses, do you think?' impatiently inquired Britomarte.

'I think she labours under an optical illusion of the most vivid character. She has an intensely active imagination, which has been evidently tried by the late excitement and danger of Jubrin.

'Then I must try to have patience with her,' said Britomarte.

But Judith did not get over her panic till the next morning, and then several days passed without a re-appearance of the ghost or the illusion.

At length one evening when the moon was bright, Miss Conyers, instead of going down into her cabin, sat in the stern enjoying the beauty of the night; and presently feeling chilly, she told Judith to go to her state-room and fetch a shawl.

The girl started to obey; but the next minute uttered a terrific shriek.

Miss Conyers sprang to her feet; and there, not three yards from her, stood Judith, struck, statute-still, with terror, gazing upon—what?

A figure just as she had described the apparition to be—thin as a skeleton, pale as a spectre; and if not so tall as the main-mast, certainly looking preternaturally tall from being so preternaturally lean; his head was bound up in a white cloth, his foot tied up in a rag, his arm in a sling, and himself leaning on a crutch;—the ghost of that Foretop Tom who had been drowned more than two years ago.

An icy chill of superstitious horror, that all her will and intellect could not prevent, shot through the veins of Britomarte Conyers.

But the next instant she had governed this feeling; and saying to herself, 'I will find out what this means,' she walked straight up to the figure and laid her hand on its shoulder.

CHAPTER L.

HOMEWARD.

We may roam through this world, like a child at a feast,
Who but sips at a sweet and then flies to the rest;
And when pleasure begins to grow dull in the east,
We may even our wings and be off to the west;
But if hearts that feel and eyes that smile,
Are the dearest gifts that Heaven supplies,
We never need leave our own dear soil
For sensitive hearts and sun bright eyes.
—*Moore.*

'Who are you, man?' inquired Miss Conyers, looking in the face of the mysterious stranger.

'Me? Oh, I'm just nobody!' answered the apparition, rather sulkily.

'What is your name?'

'Just Tom McAlpine.'

'Fore Top Tom?'

'Ay, just himself.'

Miss Conyers sank down upon a coil of ropes, and drew the trembling Irish girl to her side, and then said:

'You have surprised me very much, and you have terrified this girl nearly out of her senses, but I am glad to know that you were saved from the wreck,' then turning to her agitated companion, she said, 'Judith, you see it is Tom himself. Why don't you speak to him?'

'Sure I see it now. And I'll spake whin I'm able. I can't yet!' sobbed Judith, covering her face with her apron, and rocking herself to and fro.

'Ay, that will be the way she has treated me ever sin' I foregathered wi' her on the deck. Screeching and rinning fra me as if I had been Auld Nick!' complained the Scotchman.

'No wonder. We all thought that you were drowned more than two years ago. And she took you for your own ghost. How were you saved?'

'E'en by a miracle—nae less. When the boat capsized, I laid hold of an empty cask, and whilk buoyed me up all night until the tide turned, when I was floated far out to sea. I gave mesel' up for lost, but held on to the cask till my strength was weel nigh spent. At length I was seen and picked up by the ither life-boat, whilk had been beating about all that time. Three days after, when our bread and water was nearly gane, our boat was picked up by an outward bound Dutch merchantman, and we were saved.

'An almost miraculous preservation, indeed. You must have been astonished to see Judith here. Our preservation was quite as strange as your own.

'Ay, and I might e'en ha' ta'en the lass Judith for a ghaist, if I hadna' been tauld by the sailor lads of the castaways lost from the Sultana, and ta'en off the Desert Island by their captain.

'Oh, then you were prepared to see us,' laughed Miss Conyers. 'But still, I don't see how you should be here?'

'I was taken prisoner from the Sea Scourge.'

'Oh, ye were, were ye, ye born divil!' exclaimed Judith, uncovering her face, and speaking for the first time. 'And so ye turned pirate and murtherer, did ye? Troth, I'd rather ye'd been drowned in the say, so I had, than ye should have turned cut-throat on me hands.'

'Ay! that's the way she's guided me, ever sin' I met her on the deck,' grumbled the Scotchman. 'Will ye hear a mon speak for himsel' before you accuse him, lass?'

'And sure what can you say for yourself at all at all, afther being found upon the Sea Scourge among a lot iv divils?'

'Young leddy,' said the Scotchman, appealing to Miss Conyers, 'will you condescend to speak to the lass, and bid her be reasonable?'

'Indeed, McAlpine, I am so pained to hear that you were one of the crew of the Sea Scourge, that I have nothing to say against Judith's natural indignation,' said Miss Conyers.

'Ou, ay! a man gets it on baith sides! May be, young leddy, ye'll let me explain before you judge me.'

'If you can explain to Judith's satisfaction, I should like to hear you do it, McAlpine,' said Miss Conyers, gravely.

Aweel then, after our boat was picked up by the Dutchman, I took service with the captain and went the voyage to Calcutta, and then back to England. After whilk I shipped on a merchantman in St. Catherine's docks, calling herself the Sea Scourge, bound for the Indies, and sailing under the Stars and Stripes. And here I will take leave to say, that being a native of Ayrshire in Scotland, I owe nae mair allegiance to the Stars and Stripes than I do to the Stars and Garters or to the Stars and Crescent—whilk last I take to be the emblem of the Turk; or to the Stars and Bars, whatever they may represent, or to the stars in conjunction with any ither creatures. It was na, however, until we overhauled a Baltimore clipper that the Sea Scourge ran up the Stars and Bars, and I learned for the first time that I was shipped of a privateer. I had nae choice but to bide where I was, whilk I did until the engagement wi' the Xyphias, when the privateer was captured.'

'And ye fought agin us, ye murthering divil,' put in Judith.

'Nay, lass, that was na my duty; I was on the foretop, and na at the guns. I helped to work the ship, that was a'; and o'on that, wi' nae guid will, for I aye argued wi' myself' that I had been entrapped intil the service of the privateer; but I could na help myself' till the fight was over. I was wounded, as ye see, by a bit splinter that struck my head, and I fell to the deck breaking my arm and spraining my ankle.'

'Tom, is it the truth ye're afther telling me?' inquired Judith, through her tears.

'Aye, lass; what else? D'ye think I would tell ye a lee?'

'Then, Tom, darlint, I beg your pardon entirely for thinking ill iv ye. Troth—' And here Judith broke down and sobbed.

'Hout tout, lass! dree your eerie and see me mair,' said Tom.

'Tom, ye're a fool, sure; but how came ye here at all at all, whin all the prisoners were left at Cape Town except thim that took the oath of allegiance and shipped on the Xyphias?'

'I told my tale to the captain, and said I would like to take service on the price. And when I was able to leave my hammock he granted my petition and put me here.'

'Ooh, Tom, jewel, sure my heart's broke entirely wid the thought iv how I misthrusted and abused ye,' said Judith.

'Hout, lass, see nae mair. D'ye think a bit hard word is gaun to part you and me after a' that's come and gane?'

Miss Conyers had been for some time dropped out of the conversation. And now honest Tom became so extremely sentimental that she really felt herself one too many, and so she arose, and leaving the sweethearts together, she slipped away to her seat in the stern.

There presently her own ill-used lover joined her. And she gave him the solution of the ghost riddle by describing her meeting with Foretop Tom.

'It is singular that I have never chanced to meet him,' said Justin.

'I fancy that he has been below in his hammock until lately. He looks scarcely fit for duty now,' said Britomarte.

And then as the night was growing damp and chilly and the lights in the cabin looked cheerful and inviting, Miss Conyers proposed to her companion to go below; and they went and finished their evening in music and conversation.

The next day Justin had an interview with Foretop Tom, who was able to tell him much more relating to the rescue of the missionary party than he had learned from [illegible] Barneys.

Tom related all that he knew, either from observation or hearsay—how that the crew of the life boat, finding all their arguments and persuasions vain to induce their captain to desert the ship and join them, and being moved by the tears and prayers of the missionaries' wives, had at last consented to receive the two missionaries, who, being of slight form, they said, would not both together take up much more room than that left vacant by the scout captain. So they had been rescued from the wreck of the Sultana, picked up by the Dutch merchantman, and afterwards taken on board by the East Indiaman, which was lastly bound to the very port of Calcutta for which they themselves had sailed in the ill-fated Sultana.

From this time no event occurred to vary the monotony of the sea voyage.

As they drew nearer to the shores of their native country, Justin and Britomarte began to experience an intense and ever deepening anxiety. How, after so long an absence, should they find the friends they had left at home? Were they well? Were they even living? Who could tell? How slow was their approach to their destination! how torturing their suspense!

There came a day when Lieutenant Ethal said:

'In three weeks, if we have good luck, we shall make New York harbour.'

And then they counted the weeks until the morning came, when the young commander said:

'If this weather holds we shall be in port in four days.'

And then they counted the days until the night arrived in which the lieutenant announced:

'We shall be in New York at dawn to-morrow.'

And then they counted the hours. They sat up on deck until a late hour, hoping to be able to make out their native shore before going to rest. But there was no moon; and though the sky was clear and the stars bright overhead, yet the western horizon, on which their line of coast should appear, was veiled with clouds and fogs?

At length, weary with watching, they bade each other good night and retired to their respective state-rooms. Yet even then and there they could not sleep. Their keen anxiety as to how they should find their friends, if indeed they should find them at all, and how they should find their country, if civil war had left them a country undivided—chased slumber from their eyes, until near dawn, when, as often happens to nightwatchers, they fell asleep from sheer exhaustion, and slept profoundly until a late hour of the morning.

Britomarte was then aroused by a loud rapping at her state-room door.

She started up, only half awake and much bewildered, and demanded:

'Who is there?'

'Master, it is I. I have come to tell you that we are anchored in New York harbour,' answered the voice of Justin.

With an irrepressible cry of joy Britomarte sprang up, and with her hands trembling with delight, began to dress herself. She was as much overjoyed by the announcement as though she had not been confidently expecting it. She was soon dressed and out on deck, where Justin advanced to meet her.

'And all the land is rejoicing in the news of a glorious victory just gained!' he said as he led her on where she could see the forest of shipping in the harbour, and the forest of spires in the great city beyond.

'Thank Heaven! Thank Heaven!' she fervently exclaimed, with a heart too full to utter another word.

'The tide of war has turned, my sister. And the whole city is rejoicing in the news of a glorious victory!' repeated Justin.

'You told me that before. Yes, I heard you, and I thank Heaven for that also. This victory, Justin! It is a final one?'

'I dare not say that. But the precursor of a final one, we may venture to predict.'

'And where was it gained?'

'At Gettysburg.'

'At Gettysburg! Why, that is in Pennsylvania.'

'Yes, my sister. Lee has invaded Pennsylvania; but has been met at Gettysburg by the Union army under General Meade, and driven back with tremendous loss. The news of the victory has just reached New York, and the city is mad with joy!'

'This is glorious news to greet us on our arrival!' said Lieutenant Ethal, coming up.—'Good morning, Miss Conyers. Let us congratulate each other.'

'With all my heart!' exclaimed Britomarte, cordially grasping the hand that was extended to her.

'Here are the morning paper, Rosenthal. A boat has just come alongside and brought them,' continued the young lieutenant, showing half a dozen of the journals of the day, which he immediately divided between Justin, Britomarte and himself.

But all three were really too much excited to compose themselves to reading. They did but devour the telegraphic news containing the brief announcement of the victory at Gettysburg, and then they began to talk about it, and they continued to talk until the steward came to say that breakfast was on the table.

They went into the cabin and sat down to the table. But who could eat? They drank some coffee and made a pretence of nibbling some bread and meat. But even the fresh eggs and beefsteak, rare luxuries to the voyagers, that the boat had brought alongside that morning in time for their breakfast, could not tempt them.

They soon arose and made preparations to go on shore.

The principal part of Justin's, Britomarte's and Judith's effects had been packed up for several days. All that they had to do now, was to put up the few articles that they had left out for immediate use.

When this was done they put on their outer garments and were ready to leave the

ship—only waiting for Lieutenant Elliott who had a few last orders to give before accompanying them on shore.

Justin and Britomarte sat in the alcove.

'My sister,' said the young man, 'let me be a brother to you in reality. We are about to leave the ship which has been our home so long. The greater part of our officers have perished in the swing, and the greater part of our crew is lost. Tell me, now, as you would tell your brother, what are your plans for the future, Britomarte?'

'I will, she answered, briefly. 'Certainly my ward-robe is rather dilapidated, and nearly three years behind the times, but still, on it as going and whole. I hope it will be considered decent and passable. For the rest I have about thirty dollars in gold, which you paved with my own hair, though I am the writer. Then will endeavor to take me to Washington, and keep me for a few days.'

'And then?'

'As Heaven wills.'

Justin groaned.

'Oh, Britomarte, my beloved! think you would give me a legal right to protect you?'

'Justin! no, more of that, I implore you. If you are to remain even the semblance of friendship, the semblance.'

'It is but a semblance on your part, at least, I sometimes think,' said Justin, bitterly; 'you foolishly repeating the injustice of his words, he added,—'But no! you saved my life at the most imminent hazard of your own. Yes, your friendship, Britomarte, proves the love of other women. Yet, oh my soul! why is it, why, that you abjure the only relation in which you can naturally stand to each other? Well, well—I will not ask you. I will try to be silent on this subject—silent forever! I——' his voice sinking down and he covered his working features with his hand.

She looked at him and trembled again with the storm of her own emotions. She laid her hand tenderly upon his, and faltered:

'Justin! brother! dearest brother! I am not worth all this feeling! indeed, indeed I am not, Justin. I would die to give you one moment's pleasure. Heaven knows, that I would. I would die, but I cannot marry you, Justin! I cannot!'

'I shall never again ask you to do me the unutterable favor,' said Justin, coldly. 'I am going, upon my honor, to Washington, and must say farewell here. I shall enlist in the army, and in discharging the high duty that I owe my country, I shall seek to forget my private griefs.'

'Yes, do so, Justin,' she said, drawing him to her bosom; 'and my prayers shall follow you! And if you are not happy, you will still be blessed, since all who do their duty are so.'

'But it is not of myself that I think; it is of you—of you! So young, so beautiful, and—forgive me, Britomarte—so poor and friendless! When I think of that, and of your obstinacy, all my strength and manhood desert me!'

'Nonsense, Justin; I have health, intellect, freedom, and plenty of dollars in gold to start with. Now, what would you think of a young man in my case, with all these advantages? Would you make much a moan over him? Keep a bit of it. You would think his prospects exceedingly promising. Now, I believe you, Mr. Essential, that, all other things being equal—a young woman is quite as well able to take care of herself as a young man.'

'But this war! this war!' groaned Justin.

'Exactly. This war will open to me, as to others, a field of duty and usefulness.'

While they spoke Judith and Tom had been standing at a short distance away, conversing together.

Now the girl approached Miss Gwynne, and stood rolling the strings of her bonnet and blushing deeply.

'What is it, Judith?' the young lady asked kindly.

'Sure, ma'am, ye know I towld you that when we landed I should go to me aunt, who keeps a ship chandler's shop on Wather street, and she'd give me a home or get me a service?'

'Yes, Judith; you are not going there?—have you changed your mind?'

'Yes, ma'am, sure; but——'

'But what, Judith? Out with it,' said Justin.

'Me boy Tom wants me to marry him,' said the girl turning as red as a cabbage rose.

'Well, Judith?' said Britomarte.

'Well, ma'am, sure you remember I promised me mistress never to marry any man till the love was changed? So the women could get the upper hand by the men getting——'

'Not exactly so, Judith; but you promised me never to marry until the usual love was changed as that we women may have our rights,' corrected Britomarte.

'Well, ma'am, and sure ain't that all the same?'

'Not precisely. But what is it you want me to do now, Judith? Do you

wish me to protect you against the importunities of your lover? I will do so effectually.'

'Ma'am?'

'Do you wish me to speak to Lieutenant Ethel to order Tom McAlpine to let you alone?'

'Och, no, sure; not for the world, ma'am!' exclaimed Judith in dismay.

'What do you want, then?'

'Sure, ma'am, I want you to relaise me from me promise.'

'I thought so,' laughed Justin.

'To release you from your promise, Judith?' questioned Britomarte, with a mortified air.

'Yes ma'am, plaise,' said Judith.

'You had better do it at once, sister, or she will break through it,' said Justin.

'Why do you wish to be released from a promise so freely and deliberately given, Judith?' gravely inquired Miss Conyers.

'Well, you see, ma'am,' answered Judith, blushing and looking down and twirling her bonnet strings, 'whin I made that same promise nivir to marry a man till the laws was changed, sure I was on that basis iv an Island, where there was nivir a man to marry at all at all—let alone belaiving me gay Tom was dhrowned. So you see it made no differ. But now I'm back in a Christian counthry, and me gay Tom alive and well, and now sure I want to be relaised from me promise.'

'Well, Judith, I release you from your promise; but I do it only because I feel sure that if I did not you would break it.'

'Sure, ma'am, I thank you kindly, so I do; and so will me gay Tom,' said Judith, much relieved, as she turned and walked to rejoin her lover, who stood waiting for her in evident anxiety.

'I never could understand why Judith should call that grave and stolid Scotchman her "gay" Tom,' said Justin.

'She did it first in covert sarcasm, no doubt. And she has since continued it from habit,' answered Britomarte.

Lieutenant Ethel now joined them, saying that the boat was ready to take them ashore.

They immediately arose and went to the starboard side of the ship and descended to the boat, followed by the lieutenant.

When they had all taken their places the boat was pushed off. A few rapid strokes of the oar brought them to the pier, where they got off—hailing with deep and heartfelt gratitude their native land.

CHAPTER LI.

NATIVE LAND.

The spot of earth, where from his bosom
The first weak tones of nature rose,
Where first he cropped the stainless blossom
Of pleasure, yet unmixed with woes;
Where with his new born powers delighted,
He grew beneath a mother's hand—
There, there, the quenchless flame was lighted
That sparkles for his native land.

—*Walker.*

'Now,' said Lieutenant Ethel, on taking a temporary leave of them, 'I have some official business with the authorities here which must be attended to at once; so I shall have to leave you for a while; but I will send a man with you, and when you have found, and settled in, your hotel for the present, you can send him back to the ship with your address, and I will forward all your luggage without further trouble to yourself.'

'You pursue us with benefits,' said Justin, cordially pressing his hand.

'And if I succeed in seeing the parties I wish to see, and getting my business through in time, I will join you and spend the evening with you. By the way, when do you go on to Washington?'

'By the first train to-morrow. I should go on to-night, but it is absolutely necessary that I should write to a friend there to prepare my sister for my arrival. You know that she must long have looked upon me as lost.'

'Yes. Then if you go on to-morrow, I think that I shall be able to accompany you. You are aware that I am the bearer of dispatches to the Secretary of the Navy.'

'Certainly.'

'Well, good morning. I hope you will find pleasant quarters. Martin, do you go with Mr. Rosenthal's party,' said the young lieutenant. And then raising his cap to Miss Conyers, he struck into a by street and was soon out of sight.

The sailor left in attendance upon Mr. Rosenthal stood hat in hand waiting orders.

'Martin,' said Justin, 'go and call a carriage.'

The man started on the errand.

Miss Conyers turned to Judith, who was standing with Tom McAlpine by her side.

'Judith,' said the young lady, 'will you go with me to the hotel for the present?'

'No, thank you kindly, ma'am. When

the carriage comes, and I can go into it, sure Tom will take me to my aunt's. And when I've seen her, I can go back to the ship and find out from Mr. Martin where you are stopping. And I will come up this evening to take leave of you.'

'Very well, Judith,' said Miss Conyers, with the tears starting in her eyes, for the companionship of more than two years had very much attached her to the girl.

In a few moments the sailor returned with the carriage, and Justin put Britomarte into it, followed her, and gave the driver an order to drive to a certain hotel, where he had once been in the habit of stopping.

It was a quiet, respectable house, in a comparatively still neighbourhood, and it happened to have some pleasant rooms vacant, and at the disposal of our party.

As soon as Justin had seen Britomarte comfortably ensconced in her apartment, he went down and dispatched the sailor back to the ship with his address for Lieutenant Brook.

Then Justin started out on foot to visit his uncle, Friedrich Rosenthal, the great merchant, at his place of business in Chambers street. Besides his earnest desire to see a kinsman whom he sincerely loved and esteemed, he felt a great anxiety to hear such news of his father and sister as Mr. Friedrich Rosenthal would probably be able to give him, and as he needed funds to defray his hotel bill and his expenses to Washington, and which his wealthy uncle would readily advance to him.

Justin walked rapidly down the streets, sharply turning the corners at the imminent risk of upsetting old ladies and running over little children, until he entered into Chambers street. Every step that brought him nearer to his uncle's house and to certain news of his beloved relatives, increased his anxiety and took away his breath.

He came in sight of the house and looked up. A strange plate covered the sign-board.

[illegible]

There was a solemn pause in all his actions, and then he hurried into the house, and flew up and down the long lines of halls upon halls of goods, and upon the strange group of forms behind them.

One of the strangers advanced to meet him.

'What would you look on, sir?'

'I—look for Mr. Friedrich Rosenthal retired from business?' faltered Justin.

'Mr. Friedrich Rosenthal? I am not able to say, sir.'

'How long have you been here?'

'Nearly a year, sir,' replied the young man, looking surprised at the question.

'Is the—is Mr. Steinfeldt in?'

'Yes, sir—in the counting-room, back.'

Justin had no cards, but he took a scrap of paper from a writing-table near, and wrote his name, and handed it to the young man, saying—

'Will you take this to Mr. Steinfeldt?'

The youth started off on the errand, and presently returned, accompanied by a stout, respectable-looking, middle-aged man, whose rubicund countenance expressed much concern.

'You are a relative of the late Mr. Rosenthal, I presume?' said his gentleman.

'The late?' echoed Justin, starting back.

'Ah! I am very sorry, exceedingly sorry to have spoken so thoughtlessly. But, bless my soul, I supposed—And it has been so long—over a year,' stammered Mr. Steinfeldt, with a face full of sympathy.

'I have been absent from the country for more than two years. I have just returned from India,' said Justin, not wishing then and there to enter upon the particulars of his shipwreck.

'Bless my soul, you. And you knew nothing of what had happened here. Letters perhaps miscarried, or passed you. Dear me, yes, it must be a great shock. Come into my counting-room and recover yourself. Here, Perkins, wine—quick,' said Mr. Steinfeldt, leading the way to the back of the warerooms, followed by Justin, who accepted his invitation only that he might learn the particulars of his uncle's death, and if possible, also, some news of his father and sister.

The kind-hearted merchant made him sit down in an easy-chair. And when the wine came, pressed upon him a glass of good old port.

'Yes, it is a great shock. You say that it is more than a year since my uncle died.

'It has been—about fourteen months.'

'What was the cause of his death?'

'An attack of pneumonia, that carried him off after about ten days' illness.'

'Were any of his family with him?'

'He had no family of his own, as you probably know. He had one brother in Germany, but of course there was no time to summon him. His orphan niece, a young lady from Washington, was with him when he died.'

'But he had a brother in Washington—a Lutheran minister,' said Justin, feeling his heart stand still.

'Ah, yes—the father of that niece who

was with him in his last moments. But he went before. He fell in the first battle of Bull's Run.'

'Oh-h-h!' groaned Justin, dropping his head upon the table with such a moan of unspeakable agony that the good merchant sprang to his feet and leaned over him, exclaiming—

'Lord forgive me. And you—you are his son, and I have blurted this dreadful news so suddenly. I was thinking that you were the son of the brother in Germany.'

Justin did not answer. His shoulders rose and fell with the great sobs that shook his frame.

The merchant went and closed the door of the room, and drew the bolt, so that no other eyes should look upon the anguish of his fellow man.

'My sister—where is she?' at length asked Justin.

'She returned to Washington, enriched by the will of her uncle, who constituted her the sole heiress of his immense wealth.'

'Enriched in fortune, but oh, how impoverished in home!' groaned Justin. Then rising, he held out his hand to the merchant, saying, 'I thank you, sir, for the information you have given, as well as for your delicate kindness to a heavily stricken man. And I will bid you good day.'

'Have you a carriage at the door?' inquired the practical merchant.

'No.'

'Then I must order one for you. You are not in a condition to walk through the streets.'

Justin bowed his thanks and resumed his seat.

And when the carriage was announced, he took leave of the friendly merchant and drove to his hotel. He went at once to his own room, and gave way to the sorrow that was almost bursting his bosom.

Some hours later, when he had attained some degree of calmness, he entered the sitting-room occupied in common by himself and Britomarte.

Miss Conyers was deeply engaged reading an 'extra,' with further details of the great battle of Gettysburg. On hearing the door open she looked up, and was at once shocked by seeing Justin enter, looking pale as death, and wearing the traces of deep grief upon his brow.

She threw down the paper and started up to meet him, exclaiming—

'Justin, what is the matter? What have you heard?—Erminie?'

He crossed the room and threw himself upon the sofa.

'Erminie!' again gasped Miss Conyers, in breathless anxiety.

'Britomarte, Erminie is alive, and well, but—fatherless!' he groaned, covering his face with his hands.

'Oh, Justin! Oh, Justin! Oh, my dear, dear brother!' she cried, and forgetting all her pride, she hastened to his side, put her arms around his neck, drew his head upon her bosom, and bending her face upon it, wept with him.

And her sympathy was an unspeakable consolation.

Later in the day Justin served himself to write a letter to his sister, and this letter he enclosed in another one directed to a clerical friend in Washington, to whom he announced his return, and whom he solicited to go and break the news cautiously to Erminie, and prepare her for his arrival.

Having posted this letter with his own hand, to ensure its going by the evening mail, he returned and dined alone with Britomarte in their sitting-room.

Lieutenant Ethel, true to his engagement, came to spend the evening with them.

He entered at first, full of a project to take the whole party to the Academy of Music, to see a new opera that was creating a great sensation.

But as soon as he saw the faces of Justin and Britomarte, he knew that some distressing intelligence had met them on their arrival, and he forbore to mention his plan. He greeted them both gravely, and then took the chair offered him by Justin, and looked from one to the other in mute, respectful sympathy.

'I have received ill news since I saw you last. I have to mourn the death of my father,' said Justin, in a low voice, while Britomarte turned away her face to conceal 'the tear-drops that from pity fell.'

'I am very much grieved,' said the young lieutenant, simply and earnestly. 'Is there anything that I can do for you? If there is, pray order me. It will be a satisfaction to me to be of service to you in any way.'

'Thanks, thanks,' murmured Justin, earnestly pressing the hand that he had extended to him; 'I do not know that you can do anything.'

'And now tell me frankly—I came with the intention of spending the whole evening with yourself and Miss Conyers, either here or somewhere else, no matter where—but now tell me candidly, would you rather I should remain here or go away? Speak freely. If you wish me to remain, I will do so with comfort, or if you wish me to go, I shall not take offence,' said young Ethel, earnestly.

'I do not wish you to go, good friend, for your presence will be a comfort to us; neither dare I press you to stay, for the evening will be a dull to you as it is sad to us.'

For an answer Lieutenant Ethel took off his gloves and put them in his pockets; and drew his chair nearer to that of Justin.

Britannorto arose and rang for tea to be brought up.

'Will you tell me more? How did your honoured father die? That he died the death of the righteous I know as a matter of course; but was he ill long?'

'He was not ill. He was in the army; he fell at the first battle of Bull Run,' answered Justin gravely, adding, 'That is all I know as yet. I learned that much only from the man who has succeeded to my uncle's business. My good uncle, too, has passed away, but that lesser grief is swallowed up in the greater one.'

'Ah! yes, yes,' sighed the young lieutenant.

A few minutes passed in silence, during which a waiter appeared with the tea-service. When he had arranged the table, Miss Cosgrove dismissed him and seated herself over the tea-urn.

'I hope you succeeded in completing your business, Mr. Ray,' said Justin.

'Yes, thank you; more than I had, especially as I am now enabled to bear you company on to Washington,' replied the young man.

As it was decided that they should leave for Washington by the first train in the morning, it was thought advisable that they should all retire to rest at an early hour that night, so Lieutenant Ethel, at nine o'clock, came to take his leave.

'I shall go on board again to-night, so as to give my last instructions to Pinard Midshipman Allen, whom I shall leave in charge of the prize. But I shall be sure to meet you at the train to-morrow,' he said, as he shook hands with Justin and Britannorto, and bowed himself out of the room.

A few moments longer the two friends remained in conversation, and then Britannorto bade Justin good night and withdrew to her chamber.

There she found Judith, waiting for her.

'Ah! it is you, my dear girl? I am glad to see you. I was afraid that something had prevented you from coming, and that I should not see you again before leaving,' said Miss Cosgrove.

'Much sooner than that should have happened, I would have gone to the gates of the asylum, as I vowed, and watched every living soul that passed and every train that went out, till I found you. But once I got the news in the [illegible] from Martha, and knew I made no [illegible] then fetch you here, and here I've been staying, waiting for you, these three hours,' said Judith.

'I am sorry. I didn't know that you were here, or I shouldn't have kept you waiting.

'Bother the odds, seeing your precious self safe, for I was very comfortable entirely. But now it's only to say good-bye and good luck to you, ma'am, for it's getting on to ten o'clock, and I must be going, for we must start, while here, so she can't,' said Judith, rising to go.

'You found your aunt well?' kindly enquired Miss Cosgrove.

'Devil a bit, further on my time to her like, only when she saw me, as she thought she discovered many a long day ago, she went off into the hysterics, so she did, and had to get that we had to give her four glasses of rum before she could come round. But sure she's all right now, and the only thing in the matter is a pain in her temper as she is suffering for, and by the same token, I mustn't keep it calm her by staying out late, so I will bid you good-night, and God bless you, ma'am.

'Good-bye, and may the Lord bless you also, Judith,' said Miss Cosgrove.

'But sure I'll like to take leave iv Mistress Britannorto before I go.'

'You will find her in the sitting-room, Judith. Any of the waiters will show you where that is,' said Miss Cosgrove.

And she drew the girl to her bosom and kissed her before she let her depart.

CHAPTER LII.

HOME AGAIN.

Home again! home again!
From a foreign shore;
And oh! it fills my heart with joy
To meet my friends once more.

—Nursery Song.

After a very early breakfast, Justin and Britannorto with all their luggage, set out by the first omnibus, that left the hotel for the early train to Washington. After paying his hotel bill, Justin had scarcely time to leave it; just to know that he could get an interview from Lieutenant Ethel, whom he could summon immediately upon his arrival at Washington.

They met the young lieutenant on the steamboat. He advanced smilingly towards them saying:

'You see that I am punctual, and more than punctual, for I meet you on the steps

best instead of at the station. We could not have had a finer day for our journey,' he added, cheerfully, as he shook hands with Justin and with Britomarte.

For you see, Lieutenant Ethel was not one of those mistaken individuals who imagine that they must always continue to wear a long face for a bereaved friend. He had sincerely expressed his sympathy and honestly offered his services, and his action stood good for all time, and now he meant to be cheerful, and to try to cheer them.

They reached the station in good time.

Leaving Miss Conyers in the ladies' room, they went together to the office to procure their tickets, and there Justin told the lieutenant of his dilemma.

'Draw on me, my dear fellow, for any amount in my possession. I have a hundred dollars in my pocket-book, and you are welcome to ninety of them,' said the young man, cordially.

'Which would leave you just money enough to take you to Washington. No, thank you. Twenty dollars will answer my purpose if you will let me have the use of that much until I get home,' smiled Justin.

'I wish it was twenty thousand instead of twenty dollars, and that I were able to give you the big sum as I am willing to lend you the little one,' said the lieutenant, placing a note in Justin's hand. Justin thanked him, and got the tickets for himself and for Britomarte.

Before leaving the hotel, Miss Conyers had placed her pocket-book containing thirty dollars, in the hands of Justin, with the request that he would keep it to pay her travelling expenses until they should reach their journey's end, when he might return it. And Justin, to prevent, or rather to defer a dispute on the subject, had accepted the trust; but neither for her hotel bill nor for her railroad ticket had he touched her little hoard. He was resolved to return the pocket-book intact as he had received it.

Having secured their tickets and checked their baggage, they rejoined Britomarte and took her to the train, and found comfortable seats in the ladies' car, to which Britomarte's companionship admitted them both.

They were scarcely seated when the newsboys came into the car, crying the morning papers.

'Times, Herald, World, Tribune, &c.—Full particulars of the Battle of Gettysburg!—Conyers of the Pirate Brig Scourge!—Wonderful rescue of three shipwrecked passengers from a Desert Island!—Tribune, World, Herald, Times.'

'Now, who on earth could have got our adventure in?' exclaimed Justin, half-amused and half-annoyed at the circumstance.

Lieutenant Ethel blushed and then laughed, saying—

'I am afraid I am responsible for that, though I never supposed it would get into the papers. You see, yesterday I told the whole story of the ornies of the Xyphias to some friends and strangers that I met at dinner at the Astor House. I dare say there were some gentlemen of the press present, though I did not think so at the time.'

'That accounts for it all, then,' said Justin.

And the party bought half-a-dozen papers. And the train started.

They had a swift and pleasant run to Washington, where they arrived safely at seven o'clock in the evening.

On reaching the station, Lieutenant Ethel left the car first, to go and secure a carriage for his friends.

'Britomarte! my dear, dear Britomarte, you will come home with me to Erminie? Don't wound me by refusing. Say that you will come,' urged Justin, when he was left alone with Miss Conyers.

'No, no, no! not this evening, for the world! For this evening you and your sister should meet alone,' she earnestly replied.

'To-morrow, then?' he inquired.

'Yes! to-morrow I will see Erminie.'

As every one was now leaving the cars, they arose from their seats and went out. Lieutenant Ethel met them with a carriage.

'Where, then, shall we take you to night?' questioned Justin, as he handed Britomarte into her place.

She named the hotel where she wished to stop. And Justin gave the order to drive there.

On arriving at the house, he took care to secure a good room for Miss Conyers; but not until he was on the point of taking leave of her did he hand her her pocket-book. And he was relieved to see that, without examination, she put it in her pocket.

Then he bade her good-night, and re-entered the carriage and drove to the house of that clerical friend to whom he had written to prepare Erminie for his arrival. He did not leave his carriage, lest his friend should detain him too long from his sister. He merely sent in a request that the Rev. Mr. Salem would come out and speak to him for a moment.

And when that gentleman came out, full of wonder and welcome and warm congratu-

THE PROPERTY OF
THE ATHENAEUM CLUB
NOT TO BE TAKEN FROM THE
READING ROOM